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1989 -- WOW!**

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We Thought
They'd
Never End**

**Turbo-Info
#6**

ACcess!

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The Story
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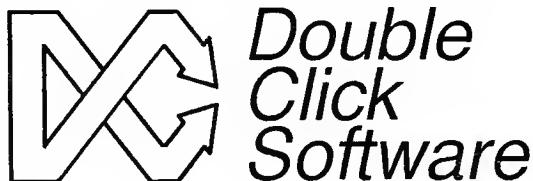
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Atari Bulletin Board

The latest scoop on what's happening in the Atari world

**Those Were the Days,
We Thought They'd
Never End**

Gordon Totty recalls what it was like being in a giant User Group in response to Paul Stampfli

COMDEX, 1989 — WOW! 7

STJAUG's Ralph Mariano gives us a first-hand report from the Las Vegas COMDEX

Turbo-Info #6

DataQue's Chuck Steinman shows us how to determine the system configuration, with source code

**ST Bashing: The Story
Continues...**

Tim Holt (ST Club of El Paso) tells about a contest from Accolade and their overlooking the Atari line

In Your Drive

Chet Cox of Atari Clubs of Denver shares his views on current happenings in the Atari world

Mini MIDI Lessons #1

Morris Miller of the ST Club of El Paso has written a series of beginner MIDI lessons, and this is the first installment

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On the Cover

Seasonal Artwork from Steve Volker, President of the Tri-City Atari Group.

Managing Editor: Patricia Snyder-Rayl
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Artwork: Steve Volker

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EDITORIAL RAMBLINGS



It's December...the end of the first year of Atari Interface Magazine and our second anniversary as user-group-oriented publishers (December '87 marked our first issue as publishers of Michigan Atari Magazine). AIM has come a long way in one short year, and we're looking forward to working with all participating clubs to make Atari Interface Magazine even better in 1990.

With this issue, we've added a few new faces. The Atari Clubs of Denver is actually a "group of groups," made up of the Atari Club of Denver and the Starfleet user group of Denver, Colorado. The Middle Georgia Atari Users Group (MGAUG) of Warner Robins, GA and the ST Atari North Coast Enthusiasts (STANCE) of Lakewood, OH have also begun participation in AIM as of this issue. We've also added one affiliated club, the Mid-Florida Atari Computer Club.

Last month saw the addition of the Atari Computer Club of Toledo (ACCT), the Central Oregon Atari Club (COAC) of Bend, OR and Ports Atari Computer Enthusiasts (PACE) in Duluth, MN.

In January, look for the Rushmore Atari Computer Enthusiasts (RACE) of Rapid City, SD, the Bluegrass Region Atari Computer Enthusiasts (BRACE) from Lexington, KY and the First Atari Computer Club of Spokane (FACCS) in Washington state!

TOS 1.4 Update

In last month's editorial, we discussed our having been sold pirated TOS 1.4 by a local dealer. This month, we have a couple updates to keep you informed.

First, according to Atari's head of engineering, Ted Maciejewski, several dealers were shipped TOS 1.4 that did not have a label containing the word "RAINBOW." These were chips sent in mid- to late-July and had labels saying "TOS 1.4 (c) USA." In the near future, Atari will be shipping TOS 1.4 on MASK ROMs and, at this time, it is not known if "RAINBOW" will appear on those chips.

Second, the official "default system date" of TOS 1.4 is 4-6-89, not 4-16-89 as we were originally told.

Finally, we were able to contact Innovative Concepts (IC) and have determined that they had no part in our dealer's pirating of TOS. The chips IC has been supplying to other local dealers were legitimate and purchased from BEST Electronics, who in turn got them straight from Atari. Our dealer finally admitted, to us and to Atari, that he was burning the chips himself. By the way, Innovative Concepts has just announced they will do TOS 1.4 upgrades to any ST/Mega for only \$125, including the cost of shipping your computer back to you, insurance and a disk of utilities. IC will also replace the marginal 74LS373 chips in the 2-chip TOS Megas with 74AS373 chips for only \$25 when installing TOS 1.4. Give IC a call at (313) 293-0730.

We would also like to extend a very special THANKS to the folks at Atari for helping us out with this whole situation, especially John Townsend, Antonio Salerno and Gayle Johnson. Those new, official TOS 1.4 ROMs in our machines are super!

'Tis the Season

To all the folks at Atari, we wish you a wonderful holiday and a VERY successful new year. After all, if Atari doesn't have a successful 1990 in the U.S., there are going to be Atari developers, dealers and users who won't have a very merry Christmas next year.

To all the 8bit and ST/Mega hardware and software developers, thank you for your support through what was, from most reports, a very tough year for Atari developers. Without the great third-party support we've seen for our machines this year, we doubt there'd be much of an Atari community left. If Atari puts their new developer support plan, as announced at COMDEX, into place AND begins a serious push in the U.S. market, then 1990 should be a great year for developers and users alike. If not....

And, finally, to our participating user groups -- and Atari user groups everywhere -- we wish you all the happiest of holidays, and may Santa leave a Stacy laptop under each and every Christmas tree!

Bill & Pattie Rayl

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The book includes topics such as Phreaking, Logic Bombs, Hardware data keys, the legal aspects of piracy and software protection, Custom disk formats, Pirate Bulletin boards and much more.

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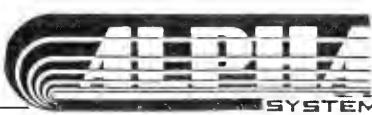
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Atari Bulletin Board

by Bill and Pattie Rayl

Atari Corp News

There has been a bit of activity in the Atari world in the past month. November means COMDEX, and there was lots of news coming out of that computer dealer event. Also, back at Atari Headquarters, things were happening.

As the Door Turns

The newly appointed President of Atari Computer, Mike Moran, has left for "greener pastures" at Sega in the past month. As we write this, no person has been named to replace him.

Federated Buyers?

Atari has also been looking for a buyer of its electronic gadgets store chain, Federated. The Los Angeles Times, on Nov. 9th, reported Silo, Inc, a subsidiary of Dixon's in Great Britain, has offered to purchase the 21 Federated stores in Southern California. Apparently, the other stores may be purchased by Fretter, although no one at Atari was commenting officially to the LA Times.

Analysts said Federated was the victim of several problems: its own poor marketing efforts and limited product selection, aggressive price cutting from Circuit City and Adray's, and a continuing absence of hot new electronic gadgets to lure customers into its stores.

At the time, Atari Chairman Jack Tramiel said the deal was part of his overall strategy of building an international electronics company that would

handle everything from computer chips to finished goods. But a year after the purchase, Atari sued, Wilfred Schwartz, the founder and former chief executive of Federated, and several of its financial advisers for overstating the company's assets. Atari claimed it would not have bought the chain if it had known its true financial condition." — The Los Angeles Times

Third Quarter Loss

Atari announced a loss of \$5.4 million over the third quarter of 1989, and despite the bad news, Atari stock stayed around the \$10 per share mark. Part of the reason the stock may be staying up is because of the Portfolio and Atari's showing at COMDEX.

COMDEX News

COMDEX was held in Las Vegas, Nevada from Nov. 13 to 17th, and while the reports were mixed at first, the consensus is very positive. The only "new" hardware Atari was showing was a multi-rez monitor to accompany the TT.

Atari had five TTs on display (actually running software available now on the ST), a handful of Stacy laptops with 4Megs RAM and 40Meg hard drives (one in the capable hands of David Small) and a large number of Portfolios. Atari even had a number of Portfolios "networked" together and sharing the same printer. WordFlair and DeskSet II were demonstrated.

Next to the Atari 286 IBM-compatible machine was a RAMcard drive to transfer data back and forth between the PC and the Portfolio. Apparently, a few

COMDEX-goers were shown a 512K version of the Portfolio, but no word was available on when these may hit the market and what their price might be.

Portfolio's a Smash Hit

The Portfolio, by all reports, was the hit of the show, with many dealers talking to Atari salespeople about carrying it. Our understanding is that dealers don't have to take the whole Atari line to carry the Portfolio, although they are greatly encouraged to do so.

We heard reports of 100 new dealers being signed up at COMDEX, but we hope to get confirmation on the exact number from Atari executives by next month's issue. For more information on the show, please see the article later in this magazine.

Developer Party Report

Sam Tramiel was reported as saying Atari plans to drop the retail price of the ST to \$399 and production is gearing up for a big push. To accompany such a push, should one happen, Atari has restructured its developer support.

Now, a registered developer with Atari has access to their dealer list, list of registered owners of Atari hardware and the list of registered User Groups. These lists are planned to be updated quarterly.

In exchange, Atari is asking all developers to re-affirm their "registered developer" status, either through a letter or phone call to Atari Corp. Atari also is asking developers to ship them three copies of their software, crippled in some manner to not be fully usable, and a self-running demo of that software. This

program, called Soft Source, will allow dealers to get a CD-ROM of the software programs, complete with demos so even a novice can professionally demonstrate and sell sophisticated software.

Developer News

CMI, the producers of a 16MHz upgrade board with math coprocessor and blitter sockets for the ST, has gone out of business after offering excellent deals recently on their boards. Another developer, Quantum MicroSystems, Inc (QMI) has reportedly gone under. QMI produced ST Talk Professional terminal package and DeskCart hardware clock and buffer cartridge for the ST. John Demar, QMI's founder, is reportedly now doing contract work.

Analog and ST-Log are no more. The December issue was the final issue of those Atari specific publications. Clayton Walnum has said he'll continue editing/writing for Larry Flint's Computer Games & Entertainment magazine.

On a bright note, Soft-Logik Publishing is shipping the new release of PageStream, version 1.8. Dealers can upgrade owners of PageStream for no charge, but you may wish to call ahead to give your dealer plenty of time to get through to Soft-Logik to check on your registration.

Commercial Software Ships with Virus

The first set of disks Soft-Logik sent out carried a "key" virus on the program disk, but Soft-Logik is assuring everyone they are not distributing the virus any longer.

Electronic Arts reported their release of Star Command has a virus present on the disk. The announcement stated that a virus killer program can kill this virus, or you can call (800) 448-8822 to find out how to return your disks for a "clean" version. According to George Woodside, author of VKiller, this one is also the insidious "key" virus.

Update News

ISD, Inc is currently shipping out their tutorial and index for Calamus users.

IB Computers has an update to the software for their IB 5.25" drive for STs with TOS 1.4. Owners of IB drives can obtain a free update by calling IB directly. IB Computers can be reached at (503) 297-8425.

Bargain Hunters Heaven

American Design Components has some good deals on "discontinued" Atari 8bit hardware. For instance, you can purchase an 800XL for \$49, new! New 1200XLs are selling for \$59, and Percom Drives are selling for \$79.95 DS and \$59.50. [Note: Some people report that, though the \$79.95 Percom is capable of DS/DD, they have received drives with SS/DD mechanisms from American Design Components. Ask before you buy!] For more information, call (800) 776-3700.

Online News

In a recent conference on GENIE, Atari wizards Dave Small and Jim Allen began a "market survey" to judge if ST/Mega owners would be interested in a 68030 upgrade for their machines. Dave Small has requested that anyone who wants to cast a vote should do so in the Gadgets Roundtable on GENIE, the GBS area of the CompuServe ATARIVEN forum or via US Mail. Please, do not call GBS as they are filling Spectre GCR orders!

A new Programming and Tech Help conference is starting up on CompuServe each Friday night at 10 PM Eastern in the Atari Pro Forum. Join David Ramsden (Antic Software), Robert Birmingham (ST Log contributor) and a host of others as they answer questions and trade source code/programming secrets. All levels of programmers are encouraged to attend!

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Those Were the Days, Paul -- We Thought They'd Never End!

by Gordon Totty (MACE)

But, alas, end they did.

In the November '89 AIM, Paul Stampfli of El Paso presented a very thoughtful piece on the virtue of small computer user groups (see The Right Brain, page 6). Our beloved editors thought that a MACE member, remembering when that distinguished body had 2,000 family memberships, might have a different perspective on the "giant club" situation.

I was there. I think about it fairly often. I miss it. It's gone, and the fault is not with MACE.

I joined MACE in January, 1985. I became member number 2,266. Up to that point in time the club had grown by leaps and bounds from its start in January, 1981. There were about 20 members at the start, and by October, 1981 there were already several hundred members.

Mystery fans, take note: MACE celebrates its birthday in June. In the June, 1985 issue, the fifth birthday was noted. That same issue included an article titled, "The Good Old Days". In it, the first president of MACE described its birth in January, 1981. That would make the fifth birthday January, 1986. Go figure. I can't.

Now, through the miracles of your imagination and the twin arts (two of the Three Rs) that truly separate us from the lower life forms, I will attempt to bring you back to our past. (Music, please; the Jack Tramiel Overture, perhaps.)

Let us return now to those days of yester-year, as out of the past comes the thundering hoof beats of several hundred

Atarians stomping into the Great Hall of the Southfield Civic Center for our monthly meeting. The Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts ride again! Hi, ho Eight Bits! Whoa! Steady, big fellow.

When I arrived, the "big fellow" was Kirk Revitzer, President. I had been fooling around with a model 400 with the membrane keyboard and a 410 recorder. Ah, tape storage. High tech, you know. Just like the big computer installations. Ha! I needed a lot of help and reassurance, and I got it at MACE, even though I was just another face in a crowd of hundreds.

Kirk is remembered by me as running the best Q&A sessions that the club ever had. He opened every meeting with it, using a microphone and about 50 feet of line, and he couldn't even get halfway back into the audience. His knowledge was amazing. Any question that he could not answer he would throw to the crowd ("crowd," not group) and there was always somebody to answer it.

In fairness to our other officers since Kirk, I should mention that they have all tried to stimulate questions. For some reason, however, the questions that used to be numerous are now few. Perhaps, instead of being inhibited by the large crowd, we enjoyed anonymity in it and that made us bolder. The group is now "cozier," but noone (myself included) seems to want to ask questions. We can't all have achieved expertise, so what's gone wrong? I think the main problem is that hardly any new users exist.

Meetings, in general, were noisy and poorly controlled. We were a happy mob, all talking at once. One reason is that, just as was pointed out in Paul Stampfli's article, most of us could not see the demos clearly enough, even with the use

of a projection TV. We could sit way down front to see. Or, like most of us, we could sit near the back and gab. I tried both, often in the same meeting.

One memorable night that we all shoved forward, straining to see, was the first time an ST was demonstrated. Awesome!

We were so big we had a store at our meetings. MACE member Jim Steinbrecher, owner of Sector One International, set up shop in the back of the hall for every meeting for years. He sold hardware, software, parts, books, diskettes and magazines. Tape, too. If there was nothing else going on, one could look at Jim's display and maybe make a purchase. Or, just talk to Jim. I am sure that Jim was fully capable of answering all of the questions that Kirk handled.

MACE had members in South America, Australia and even Toledo, Ohio. Our elections included multiple candidates for each office, and MACE had ten elected officers back then. Candidates even made speeches on election night. Today, an election night speech is more apt to be, "Gosh, doesn't anyone want to run against me? I'll do it if no one else wants to."

Blessings on our officers. We need them now more than we ever did before if we are to survive. Someday we may have an election with no candidates and it will be all over.

The main thing that separates then and now, at least for me, was the feeling of belonging to something big, important and secure. MACE did not look like it would ever crumble or decay. Today, for me personally, membership means that I am in a group that is too small, too fragile and too insecure.

In 1985, I thought MACE would never end. (Those were the days, my friend.) Sadly, in 1989 I worry about whether or not the end is near. Size is important. It is a significant indicator of strength and health.

Atari success, MACE membership and my shopping experiences are all related. Ponder these facts. I bought my Atari 400 from Sears, Roebuck and Co. — still (I think) the largest retail sales chain in the world. They don't carry Atari anymore.

Next, I bought an 800XL at K-Mart (I was waiting for the 1450XLD, but that's another story). I think that K-Mart is the second largest retail sales chain in the world, although others are gaining fast. They don't carry Atari anymore.

Moving up for more power without the price, I bought a 130XE from United Computer, a small, single-outlet, local computer store. They have gone out of business now, along with many other small independents.

Golly, that ST demo at MACE was impressive. I had to have one, at last. I bought a 1040ST by mail order. Local stores were out of stock or couldn't get them. I didn't want to wait. Subsequently, Atari withheld stock from the mail order houses to give it to Federated. What happened to Federated, folks?

Since then, Electronics Boutique, Babbage's and Software, Etc. have all dropped Atari from their shelves. Adding insult to injury, so have our local Children's Palace and Toys 'R Us stores. You can get software for your IBM or clone at Toys 'R Us.

Makes one feel good, doesn't it?

We no longer have a store at our meetings. We may still count our paid membership in hundreds, but our meeting attendance is now regularly measured in tens.

We're still at the Southfield Civic Center, but not in the Great Hall. I've noticed fashionable exercise groups in there (you can't sweat right unless you look right) and even a fencing club one night. MACE no longer needs nor can afford the space. We're in the small room in the back, and our officers are looking for something less expensive.

In the good old days, the editor of the MACE Journal (it's gone, too) had an enormous job. I started writing in the June, 1985 issue. It had 46 pages and was supported by one club. AIM runs about 35 (excellent) pages, and is supported by 15 clubs, at last count. Don't misread my intention. I am not criticizing or attempting to belittle AIM. It is a great magazine, destined to be even greater (watch out, Current Notes!). I am only trying to measure the size of the early MACE editor's job for you. My first editor, Ann McBain Ezzel, was driven bonkers by the task. She "retired" talking to herself.

Perhaps the reason I feel the sense of loss and regret that I do, together with the fear of the future, is that I came into a big group and watched it dwindle. I keep thinking of all the great people who meant so much to us who don't come around anymore. Sure, we have great people now! But where are all the others?

Furthermore, it isn't just our club that is declining. It seems to be the entire Atari community in the United States. I have never

regretted buying my Atari computers. They have all given me great enjoyment. I want it to continue. I don't want to join the owners of the Coleco Adam, the Timex Sinclair, and the Texas Instruments...what was it anyway, the TI99-4A?

Paul Stampfli is in a small group. He wrote of "learning, and growing and making friends along the way." He concluded, "Kinda sounds like life, doesn't it?"

I've had my share of learning, but the pace is slowed. Lots and lots of friends, but lots less now. Shrinking, not growing, everywhere I look. Is this what death is like?

I've seen both sides, big and small. Bigger is better. It was more fun.

According to Paul Stampfli, El Paso is hot, sunny, and brown. Well, Michigan is grey and cold. Winter is coming home. I envy you, Paul. Enjoy, and hope it lasts.

Now, if I have made any MACE member cry, I'm sorry. Remember, it's always darkest before the dawn. So, put on a happy face. Smile, darn ya, smile! Let a smile be your umbrella. Just direct your feet to the sunny(vale?) side of the street. Somewhere, over the rainbow, bluebirds fly. Who knows, Atari may yet return to the American market. It ain't over till it's over!

Don't feel like you belong to that Borneo tribe that "worships" a WWII plane replica in hopes that GI Joe will come again to drop packages of goodies from the sky. Golly gee, Annie, it ain't that hopeless. Cross your fingers when you wish upon a star. I just heard a rumor of a big U.S. sales blitz from the latest bozo.....



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COMDEX Fall 1989 -- WOW!

by Ralph Mariano (STJAUG)

This article originally appeared in issue #114 of ST Report and has been reprinted by permission.

The list of exhibiting developers was like a who's who register in the Atari community.

Atari's executive representation was excellent, lead by Jack Tramiel (the founder) and his sons, Sam and Leonard, along with Antonio Salerno, Mel Stephens, Charles Cherry and almost everyone I know, either from online or through my dealings with the company. I did, however, have the distinct pleasure of meeting most all the folks for the first time, and believe me, they were indeed warm and friendly at all times.

Portfolio Interest

The Portfolio was clearly the hit of the Atari display. Sure the TT was there...but, in sheer numbers, Portfolio ran away with the show with the number of folks coming into the Atari booth specifically to "see" the Portfolio. The stats say Atari sold approximately 123,000 Portfolio units to date and there is no end in sight.

Please, keep in mind my friends, the Portfolio may be the best thing to ever happen to Atari... "Why?" you ask. Easy, the game image is slowly going down the tubes. How do you spell relief? Portfolio.

Showing off Deskset II

Atari Corp. had Deskset II on display and in the capable hands of Elizabeth Shook. Admittedly, after Miss Shook

gave a demonstration of DeskSet II, it certainly appears to have a number of first rate, redeeming values. DeskSet II is designed as a typography modification system as opposed to a DTP program. Contrary to preliminary reports it deserves a second look.

Atari Developers

The third party developers who were setup in the Atari area put on quite a show for all attendees. The "NEW" goodies to be seen were simply dazzling to the senses, for example, the 19" Multi-Rez monitor in use in the Pagestream (Soft-Logik) cubicle. The STe, TT, Mega File 44, Stacy, Portfolio, Moniterm 19" monitors, SIMM Expansions, T16 16mHz upgrades and more were all being shown.

Developers in attendance at the Atari site included:

- ◆ SStart & Antic - Jim Chapperal
- ◆ Gadgets by Small - Dave & Sandy Small and Doug Wheeler
- ◆ Fast Technology - Jim Allen
- ◆ JRI (John Russell Innovations) - John Russell
- ◆ Soft-Logik Publishing - Mike and Deron Kazmaier and Mark
- ◆ ISD - Nathan Potechin and Julius Oklamcak
- ◆ Migraph - Liz Mitchell
- ◆ Abacus
- ◆ Michtron - George Miller
- ◆ Blue Chip Software - Lauren Sellers
- ◆ Soft-Aware - Richard Skraly
- ◆ Dr. T's
- ◆ Video Touch
- ◆ Word Perfect - Reed Hainsworth

Getting the most attention was, without a doubt, the Portfolio. Many in-

dividuals from the MS-DOS world who had never considered an Atari as a serious computer source were deliberately seeking out the Atari display to examine the Portfolio.

Naturally, they *had* to see all the other 'neat' goodies running in the Atari area. Most were, by their own admissions, "quite impressed" with the performance of the Atari computer line.

News on the TT

The TT model uses the 68030 CPU and supports 5 resolutions on one multi-sync monitor and has built-in support for the Moniterm and other big screen monitors. TTs were in use in several cubicles and represented itself quite well. ISD was running DYNACADD on a TT along with a plotter -- very impressive.

There were however, a number of Mega STs running the T16 16mHz enhancement as well, and they looked comparable to the TT in many ways. I saw "clones" of my system in use and was pleased to see that others felt the same as I. I chose to build up my Mega4 with a Moniterm and T16 enhancement.

The STe

The STe has two additional ports on the left forward side and are for the new joysticks. On the back are 2 RCA jacks for stereophonic output. The STe was set up displaying games. Since it was using the extended color palette, stereo sound and the light gun, it now looks like a serious contender in the entertainment arena.

The Stacy

My favorite, the Stacy (ST laptop) also had a prominent position of display

here, one was in the very capable hands of GBS (Gadgets by Small), demonstrating the Apple Macintosh emulator, Spectre GCR.

Another Stacy was at the Blue Chip Software cubicle with Lauren Sellers doing the honors demonstrating Word Flair. The other units were in the MIDI areas, and justifiably so, as they seemed to fit right in.

Since Stacy has passed the FCC type acceptance tests, it won't be long now...perhaps by mid-December. [Ed.: We could not obtain confirmation from Atari that the Stacy has passed FCC approval.]

Moniterm monitors were quite numerous. The performance of these beauties is nothing short of spectacular. I found that the major stumbling block for most programs is a simple fix to the video call. One must use VDI instead of getez -- then the big screen is free to "do its thing." The Moniterm was in use en masse in nearly all the developer's cubicles.

The Atari reception was well put together, and the revelation of highly increased developer support through a totally revamped program was indeed a welcome announcement. Atari's goals, as far as I am concerned, are well within reason for 1990. [Ed.: for more info on this, see Atari Bulletin Board elsewhere in this issue.]

Mr. Gordon Monnier introduced this reporter to Leonard Tramiel early on in the evening, and from that time forward, the delights of the evening went strictly uphill. In fact, I found Leonard to be quite charming and very willing to discuss the future of Atari.

As the evening wore on, Leonard invited me to accompany him as he 'made the rounds' of the reception. I got to meet John Townsend and Ken Badertscher. I must say, both young men were very impressive. Atari has an excellent staff assembled and should become quite a competitor in the coming months.

A very pleasant surprise came later in the evening when I found John Eidsvoog playing one of my favorite styles of music, progressive jazz. Folks...John is not good...he is a great musician.

Ron Luks, CompuServe Atari Forum Manager: "I got the feeling that Sam's got his company under control. He's got his group set up, and they're actually starting to deliver and doing it in a low key manner."

Bob Brodie, Atari User Group Coordinator: "I really enjoyed developers coming up to the TT and trying it out. The new Editor of STart, Tom Byron, came by, saw the TT and said 'Let's see how well you maintained downward compatibility' and whipped out a Start magazine and disk. He booted up RezRender and tried it. What would take RezRender hours to do on the ST was taking only minutes or moments on the TT. Daren Kazmaier came by, and we nicknamed PageStream 'PageScream' because it was really flying on the TT."

The Reviews Are In!

"... If you own a hard drive ... then RUN, don't walk, to your nearest Atari dealer and ask him to order DIAMOND BACK from Data Innovations, Inc."

Victor T. Albino, ST World

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LeRoy Valley & Ron Robinson, ST Informer

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Page 1

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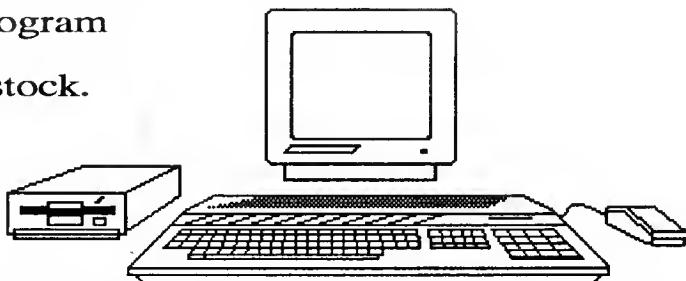
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Turbo-Info #6

Determining the System Configuration

by Chuck Steinman (DataQue)

This article will present one way to set up a program to run under the Turbo-OS, yet still be compatible with the Atari XL/XE operating system. It is assumed that the reader has some knowledge of programming at the assembly language level. This installment will concentrate on the allocation of RAM.

To make memory management a bit easier for the programmer, the Turbo-OS features several different routines to control memory allocation and de-allocation. There are no such routines in the Atari OS, other than memory is allocated by the operating system for its own use. There are memory locations to indicate the lowest and highest available RAM locations. These pointers are modified by the application program rather than the OS.

When I set forth to write the Turbo-OS, I determined that there were four types of memory that I would support. To maintain compatibility with current programs, there was a limit to what could be done with standard memory, since current applications would not be calling my routines. The same would apply to the extended RAM, which is banked in the \$4000-\$7fff range using the PORTB register of the PIA. The nature of the various types of RAM were discussed in an earlier AIM issue.

There have been a few people tell me there is no need for any memory management on the Atari 8-bit computers. If an application needs RAM, it just uses it, and when the program terminates, another program can use it. Well, that

presents problems when more than one program has to share memory. This happens quite often despite what you may think. If you boot a disk operating system into your computer, and then an application program, you would have two programs resident. There are many times when there are incompatibilities between application programs and particular DOS versions. DOS 2.x compatibles are usually the worst.

Having to load in DUP.SYS is a major trauma. If there is a program in memory you want to preserve, you have to have a MEM.SAV file on the disk. This allows you to save part of your program to disk, enough to load DUP.SYS into RAM. But then, if you happen to want to copy a file, you are just out of luck. You either have to corrupt your program or copy a sector at a time. This all happens, even though there probably is at least 16K of RAM being wasted under the OS ROM. RAMdisks were a fudge to help this problem, automatically protecting the resident program would have been a better solution.

Yeah, I know, all of you SpartaDOS users are grinning from ear-to-ear about now. Well, there are problems there also. Lets say my program wants to use the RAM under the OS, or one of the extended (XE type) banks? Can I jump in and use them? No, but not only that, I have no way to determine if that RAM is being used. There may be 4 to 16 banks of 16K just sitting there...or SpartaDOS may be using part of them as a RAMdisk. But how does the application program know? It cannot, since there is no means provided to indicate what banks are avail-

able and how many banks there were to start with.

Well, I hope you can see my point. Programs should be written to be more dynamic. If the RAM under the OS is used, then look for banked RAM. If that is already used, or not available, then ask the user what he wants to do. Not just "Hey bud, can I overwrite your valuable data?" but give the guy the option to save the data, move it or destroy it. I know, I know, why do you need this type of sophistication in a game machine?

This is where the Turbo-OS routines jump in. If you have an application that needs four banks of extended RAM, you make the Talloc call specifying you need four banks. Those four banks, if available, will be flagged as used, so that other programs will not use them. If there are not four banks available, then a bitmap of all free banks is returned. A similar procedure is followed by the extended and explicit RAM types.

Enough talk. I am sure you programmer types want to see some code fly by your tired eyes about this time. Well, I will present a code segment which will determine whether there is a Turbo-OS (and Turbo-816) installed, and what memory is available. Better buckle up, here we go!

Chuck Steinman's
8bit assembly source
code starts on the
following page.

```

; first some memory locations need to be defined.
basebyte dsb 1           ; memory base address
basepage dsb 1
basebank dsb 1
lastbyte dsb 1           ; memory ending address
lastpage dsb 1
lastbank dsb 1
tempvar1 dsb 1           ; temporaries
tempvar2 dsb 1
tempvar3 dsb 1
expanded dsb 1           ; flag for expanded RAM
                           ; availability

; note: this segment is fully code relocatable.
appropriate lda #$a5
          cmp #$c001   ; this is a flag to indicate there
          bne not_816  ; is a Turbo-816 installed
          cmp #$c000
          beq was_816

not_816 lda #$00
          sta expanded
          sta basebank
          sta lastbank
          lda #memlo
          sta basebyte
          lda #memlo+1
          sta basepage
          lda #memtop
          sta lastbyte
          lda #memtop+1
          sta lastpage
          ldy #$00 rts
                           ; set all flag/pointer defaults
                           ; no expanded RAM available
                           ; don't really need to do these
                           ; two, but let's be official!
                           ; construct a pointer to the lowest
                           ; available standard RAM address
                           ; as determined by the OS & DOS.

was_816  lda #$03
          jsr tramck
          lda taraml
          ora taraml+1
          beq not_816
          acc 16

do_expand lda taraml
          ; preset to max available

do_loop  sta tempvar1
          pha
          acc 08
          lda #$03
          jsr talloc
          acc 16
          pla
          sta basepage
          clc
          adc tempvar1
          ; add amount to get ending address

          sta lastpage
          acc 08
          cpy #$00      ; was there an allocation error?
          bpl no_error

          error    acc 16      ; RAM may not be contiguous
                           ; back off by a page, check again
                           ; dea
                           ; to find largest contiguous block
                           ; of unused RAM.
                           ; acc 08
                           ; return with error status
                           ; ldy #$ff
                           ; rts

no_error  stz basebyte
          lda #$ff
          sta lastbyte
          sta expanded
          ldy #$00
          rts
                           ; always begins on a page boundary
                           ; always ends before a page
                           ; boundary
                           ; set flag for later testing
                           ; rts

```

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ST Bashing: The Story Continues...

by Tim Holt (ST of El Paso)

I walked into Jenkins' Computers yesterday, and there on the counter was a nice display for a new contest being held by Accolade. You remember Accolade; they make Test Drive, among other ST software.

Well, I thought, I am always ready for a free trip, or for Ed McMahon to come knocking on my door, so I scooped up some entry forms. Let's see, this was the "Life in the Fast Lane" contest. Hmm...sounded good. What could I win?

According to the entry form, I could win a choice of prizes. Sounded good so far. I could win:

- ◆ A Grand Prix Motorcycle Weekend in Laguna Seca, Ca.
- ◆ An Indy Car Grand Prix Weekend
- ◆ An Offshore Powerboat Weekend

WOW! Nifty prizes! No purchase necessary! (Even better, since I still owe Jenkins' money...) Ok, I fill out the "Official Entry Form." It asked the standard questions — name, address, city, etc. Then, down there at the bottom I am asked to check which computer I have.

Let's see, the ones listed are: Apple II series, Apple IIGS, Commodore 64/128, Commodore Amiga, IBM/Tandy Compatibles and Macintosh. Where is the ST? It isn't listed! Not even an "Other" category!

My blood begins to boil. Tom, the co-owner of Jenkins' looks at me. "Don't you hate it when they do that?" I responded yes. I could really feel for him. Here

he is, expected to display the contest thingy, and it doesn't even make mention of the type of computer that he sells. It makes a potential customer think that the STs or Megas aren't even considered game machines!

Geez! We have hit a pretty low point when the ST line of computers aren't even considered game machines! I could understand if I owned a VIC-20 or a Timex-Sinclair, machines that are no longer made. But Accolade still makes games for the ST! And the ST is STILL being made! What is the problem?

I believe this is a symptom of a larger disease. There have been other "contests" where the ST was relegated to the area of "Other Computer" or no mention was made at all. This was just the latest in a long line. Just because we have been slighted by Accolade this time, doesn't make them the only guilty party.

Ok Holt, you talked a lot, now what do think we should do? Well, there are several things that you can do: (These are by no means the only things we can do, but since the revolution is nonviolent, bombing Accolade is prohibited by several Federal Laws.)

1. Enter the "Life in the Fast Lane Contest." You do not need an official entry form, just a 3x5 card that contains the following information: Name, Address, City, State, Zip, Name of Retail outlet where you get software, City and State of that store, and most importantly: type of Computer owned.

Mail your entry form to:

Accolade
Life in the Fast Lane Sweepstakes
PO Box 8973,
Westport, CT. 06888

Entries must be in by March 15, 1990.

Again, be sure you state you have an Atari computer. (Who knows, your "protest" might win you a prize!)

2. The second thing you can do is write to Accolade and demand to know why your computer was neglected. Do not write to the above address because that is just a company that handles sweepstakes processing. They couldn't care less what type of computer you have. You can reach Accolade writing to the following address:

Accolade Software
Office of the President
550 South Winchester Blvd.
San Jose, CA. 95128 (408)-296-8400

If you call them, also write. Calls mean nothing unless there are millions (something that won't happen), but letters begin to pile up and make a mess in someone's office.

3. Next time you are in contact with an Atari official (be sure he or she is one that will have a job there next week) ask them why they don't have better contacts with the software houses. One little box on an entry form is free advertising! Or, you might want to write the big cheeses at Atari. The address is:

Atari Corp.
Office of the President
1196 Borregas
Sunnyvale, CA. 94086
(408)-745-2367

It has become apparent that the big wigs at our favorite computer company really don't care what happens outside in the real world to us little users.

If we want any kind of action to take place in our favor, we better do it ourselves. Write, write, write! Or we will become parents of cute, but abandoned, orphans.

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SPEED LIMIT 8MHz

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In Your Drive

by Chet Cox (ACD)

"Hey, kids! What time is it?!"
"It's In Your Drive #24 Time!"

Well, so this is what it feels like to appear in AIM! After having to "hold back" and restrain myself in STart and Antic, it's gonna feel good to be able to really cut loose!

Since we're trying to see how much (or how little) space we should take up in AIM, we'll have a short IYD this month. But in that shortness, let's make sure we cover all types of our Ataris!

That Portfolio

First on the agenda is the Portfolio. After getting my hands on this little \$400 wonder, I have to say that those people who refuse to consider it (Because it is sold by Atari) are cutting their own throats. Yes, even more so than when they ignore the ST or the XE! Because the Portfolio, though limited, is the most portable full-blown computer around, and the only decent alternative can run \$2000.

Not that it's for everyone. The only people who really need the Portfolio are those who have to do much of their work "in the field." A contractor, for instance, is using one to be able to change parameters on the building (and on the costs) as things are discovered, or as new costs are determined.

A writer would be able to jot down notes, then turn them into the finished product after feeding the words into a home machine. Similarly, a student could take notes on the Portfolio, feed those

notes into an ST's word processor, then expand those notes into a complete term paper — much more quickly than using handwritten notes and retying from those handwritten notes. The terminal software included makes it simple to transfer to a home computer or to log onto a BBS or another computer via phone modem.

Quite simply, the Portfolio does not offer quality, finished work. It uses a simple text editor, a Lotus-type spreadsheet and a quickie database to do rough work and to save time. Time is, more than ever, more valuable than money. For around \$500 (Portfolio + cable + pseudodisk), hundreds of hours can be saved in a single year. Now, Where's that STacy?

A Flawed Gem

Diamond Write fails to live up to the promise of itself, its parent Diamond environment or the past achievements of programmer Alan Reeve. These are hard words for me to write, for Alan's work in the past has been innovative, useful, and brilliantly executed. His weaknesses (inadequate documentation and an inability to use different DOSes with his products) were far outshined by his considerable strengths as a programmer filling the needs of a hungry Atari populace.

Diamond Write promises much, and could be forgiven for falling short if it did even some of what it claimed. However, it not only is slow (almost forgivable), but can't perform many of the on-screen functions, even when all the prompts insist that such and such a function has been performed.

For instance, you try to "rubber band" a block of text. This performs well, up to

a point. Holding the mouse button down (or a joystick button, or a touch tablet button...Diamond can be configured to use an ST mouse, an XE mouse, a joystick or a touch tablet) while moving the mouse will create an expandable box which wraps around a block of text. The text is supposed to then be shaded, so you'll know it's marked. You may then delete, move or insert that block...in theory.

In actuality, the text doesn't become shaded, nor can you delete, move or insert that block of text. The pull-down menu bars will say you have done so, and will give you every prompt as if you did. But, NOTHING HAPPENS! This goes on with every feature. You can't get out of the 40 column mode! You can't change the margins! It's infuriating to see Diamond Write ALMOST succeed in each task, only to fall just short. It almost does everything, but succeeds in hardly anything.

If Diamond Write succeeded at getting print from the screen to the printed page (ARRGH! You can't always get it to print to the printer either!), in any shape or form, it would still be worthwhile. Its ability to use and manipulate fonts is unequalled in the 8bit Atari world, and it has a real "What You See is What You Get" screen.

But, it does no good to be able to see on-screen what you want if you can't get it to the printer! It's inconceivable to me that this program comes from the creator of News Station, Publisher Pro and Diamond!

Perhaps Alan Reeve suffers from that age-old soap opera malady and is being impersonated by an evil twin?

Silly Japanese Cartoon Giant Robot vs Godzilla

If you got a chuckle from the above title, if you've gotten a laugh and a good time from bad Japanese monster movies, AND if you've enjoyed the "un-science" of Robotech, Battletech or Transformers, you'll get a real kick out of a mindless game of Razrats.

Wargamers who play hugely complex historical simulations occasionally enjoy a simple, purely-for-fun game. These games, called "beer and pretzels games," offer a chance to just play around without worrying about historical accuracy, scientific plausibility or internal logic.

Razrats is an old-timey beer and pretzels game of the best variety. Don't go looking for a great deal of internal logic. You command up to four "razrats" (giant robots, or bug robots, or something) which can carry grenades, lasers, and torpedoes — in addition to armor. These razrats are then dropped onto a planet which resembles a checkerboard with terrain features. Your razrats then jump around, throw grenades at, fire lasers at, shoot torpedoes at, and jump on your opponents. Fun and destruction, and don't ask questions such as "Why are these razrats shooting at each other?" or "What's the point of this battle?"

After all, how can you take these razrats seriously? You've named your team something like "Hokum's Razors" and you've named your razrats things like "Moe," "Crusher Boy," or "Stomper." And you've chosen razrats shaped like amoebas or red teardrops.

Strategy? Mostly guesswork. High grasses protect, somewhat, from lasers and impacts. High ground means you can toss grenades farther, but you're a better target. You program an entire turn's moves at once, and movement then occurs AFTER everyone has programmed their razrats. A lot of ammunition gets wasted, shooting where your opponent *was* or where you think they *might* be. One to three players can play. Three is best. Even better when you've tipped a few drinks!

Too bad this is only for the ST (and only in color)! It'd make one dynamite game for the XE and XEGS!

The Best Things in Life are Free (Almost!)

Sigh. We have to admit that the supply of useful 8bit software is drying up. It's been a long time since the days of Syn-File+, PaperClip and A Financial Wizard! Yet we have new products appearing on disk that rival the best of the old days, and sometimes surpasses the material for other 8bit computers people are paying big bucks for!

They're right there in your favorite Atari magazines. Antic, which is troublingly kicked to bi-monthly status, just included one of the best financial programs on its monthly disk.

"Budgetizer" covers one of the problems which many financial programs never address. You have expenses which you must meet once or twice a year, such as taxes, insurance, or car tags. Those expenses can come to a big hunk of bucks all at once. "Budgetizer" takes your annual, semi-annual, whatever expenses, then will break them down into monthly increments to

let you know how much you need to "put aside" each month to meet the final expense. It's easier to put a couple of bucks to the side each month than to come up with the whole thing at once.

That same issue (October 1989) also includes a directory program from BASIC, a BASIC speed-up tool, a quick "Capture the flag" game, three text adventures (each quite good!) and a VERY strange jump-and-climb arcade game. All these for one magazine+disk — \$9.95 off the rack, or \$4.67 by subscription.

ANALOG, which has re-absorbed ST-Log, is jam-packed with goodies this time. A Concentration game, a title screen maker, some BASIC utilities (memory resident) and a BASIC tutorial round out this disk. (ST users should enjoy this too! The ST disk features a GFA BASIC tutorial, a Family Feud game, a virus killer, and a great animated Christmas tree to decorate.) Its price ranges from \$13 on the stands to \$6.59 by subscription.

[Ed. Notes: ANALOG/ST-Log will no longer be published after the Dec. 1989 issue]

Well, I did promise to keep this short, and look at how long I've let it become. Let's call it quits until next time, when we'll be able to mention Monitor Master, some more about Hillsfar, some material for the XEGS and the old 2600 and 7800 machines too. Until next time, never wiggle your fuji in public!

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Expand your ST's memory to ONE Megabyte, TWO and ONE-HALF Megabytes or even FOUR Megabytes with tech-specialities plug-in memory modules. All memory boards fit under the R/F shield. The CPU is completely available for any future enhancements (blitter, coprocessors, PC-emulators, speedup kits etc.). No soldering is required.

520ST modules use 256K DRAMs for upgrades to 1 MB and 1 Megabit DIPs for 2-1/2 and 4 MB upgrades. All boards are fully socketed and the expandable boards can be configured for either 256K or 1 Mb chips. This means that you can start by upgrading your 520 to one Megabyte and later move up to either 2.5 or even 4 Megabytes--the maximum for any ST, even the Mega! Installation is completely solder-free. Comes with detailed illustrated instructions and a one (1) year limited warranty.

expandable boards:

520A	Socketed, no RAM	\$129.
520B	1 MB, socketed	\$179.
520C	2.5 MB, socketed	\$395.
520D	4 MB	\$545.

non-expandable boards:

520-2	Socketed, no RAM	\$79.
520-1	upgrades to 1 MB	\$149.

Upgrade your 1040ST or 520STfm just as easily!

Send us your 520STfm and we will upgrade it to ONE Megabyte by installing a second bank of memory, easily removable in case you want to upgrade again. Complete with installation for only \$149 plus shipping.

Or install one of our 1040 (fits 520STfm too) memory boards and upgrade your ST to 2-1/2 or even 4 Megabytes. There are nowadays four (4) different versions of the 1040/520 motherboards around. If you bought your ST less than 2 years ago, you need to check your machine, detailed info in our catalog.

Version "0" fits all "old style" 1040/520 with 6 ROM chips under the power supply. Limited space above the 1040 mother board prohibits the use of conventional sockets in one bank. Optional "ZERO Height" sockets allow you to have this bank socketed too, so you can plug in or exchange 1 Mbit chips. The "ZERO-Height" socket kit is also available separately so you can install it at any time!

1040A	1 Bank sockets, no RAM	\$110.
1040B	Fully socketed, no RAM	\$149.
1040C	2.5 MB + 1 bank sockets	\$365.
1040D	4 MB, 32 1 Mb DRAM installed	\$565.

Version "1" fits all 1040/520 with the memory chips under the power supply. Available room prohibited the use of "DIP" packaged chips. The main board is only 6.4" x 2.9" and needs "ZIP" packaged 1 Mb x 1 DRAM. It fits in the area under the power supply with the shield installed and stays 0.5" away from the CPU to allow attachment of other upgrades. More details in our catalog!

1040A1	no sockets, no RAM	\$110.
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1040C1	2.5 MB, no sockets	\$334.
1040C1A	2 MB installed, 2nd bank socketed	\$365.00
1040D1	4 MB installed	\$495.

Upgrades for version "2" of the 1040/520 motherboard should be available in a month!

All upgrades can be equipped with a Clock Option on the Memory Board, comes with software, only \$30. Stand-alone CLOCK, please specify 520/1040 and your version of the motherboard \$38.

EXPANDABLE Hard Drive Kits

come complete with software and all parts needed to get the system operational, 1 year ltd. warranty. There are right now three different case styles available:

1. Tower Type, 10" wide x 6.8" high x 15" deep, if sitting on your desk with monitor on top, with full SCSI interface and 'DMA-through'

-150 W PC power supply w/fan

-room for up to 5 half height hard drives or combination full/half height

-mounts on floor, under desk or on desktop

-can power up 520ST and external floppy drives.

-optional delay circuit for CPU allows fully automatic power-up!

TOS No Drive, install your own emb. SCSI drive \$265.

T0 No Drive, MFM controller \$299.

T0R No Drive, RLL controller \$475.

Complete with drive mechanism:

10 MB \$485. 20 MB \$565. 30 MB \$695.

40 MB \$745. 64 MB \$795. 85 MB \$895.

2. Monitor Style, 13.25" wide (same as MEGA) x 15" deep x 3.8" high with single port host adapter

-ready for up to three 1/2 ht or 1 each full/half ht. hard/tape/floppy drives

-55 W power supply with 115V fan

-can be placed under monitor or at side of your desk

M0S No Drive, install your own emb. SCSI drive \$179.

M0 No Drive, MFM controller \$295.

M0R No Drive, RLL controller \$365.

Complete with drive mechanism:

10 MB \$395. 20 MB \$495. 30 MB \$545.

40 MB \$685. 49 MB *\$625. 64 MB \$795.

85 MB *\$795.

3. Desktop Style, 4.5" wide x 6" high x 13" deep with single port host adapter

-ready for 2 1/2 height or 1 full height drive

-55 W power supply

-optional fan available (add \$18)

D0S No Drive, install your own emb. SCSI drive \$149.

D0 No Drive, MFM controller \$279.

D0R No Drive, RLL controller \$349.

10 MB \$355. 20 MB \$475. 30 MB \$525.

40 MB \$695. 49 MB *\$595. 64 MB \$725.

85 MB *\$745.

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Replace the 20 MB drive in your MEGAFILE 20 with a 42 MB 40 ms autoparking drive. Comes with a 1 year warranty on the drive mechanism. Exchange price including installation with your drive in good condition: \$260., \$369. outright.

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Host adapter cards are separately available and come with software and DMA cable or additionally with case and 6' round shielded SCSI cable with embedded power supply lines. Prices after the "/" are for version with case and cable, 1 port \$79/119 full SCSI \$119/159

CPU CASES:

Upgrade 520/1040 to the MEGA standard.

* Separate CPU and keyboard, gain space for three each 3.5"/5.25" floppy, hard or tape drives in two separate drive bays. Full height drives will also fit.

* A 150 W power supply with fan provides power for all possible combinations and keeps everything cool

* Reset button on keyboard

* A delay circuit allows fully automatic 1ID power-up.

* Monitor can be switched on/off with CPU, using an optional cable.

* Our kit uses a steel case 18" wide x 12" deep x 8" high, easily strong enough to support a high resolution monitor.

* The original keyboard gets a low profile enclosure, 18.7" wide x 7" deep x 2" high, consisting of a metal bottom part and the modified plastic top of the original case, supplied as exchange or you do the modification yourself. The kit comes preassembled and installs without soldering. All mounting kits, wire harnesses and connectors to modify a standard machine are included.

Complete kit, please specify your machine type \$295

OPTIONS:

Hard Drive kits for the CPU case consist of host adapter/controller with support bracket if necessary, DC harness and control cabling and might also be used with customer supplied case/power supplies. Kits with controller cards come with connections to two 5.25" drives. Kits for embedded SCSI drives come with one SCSI connector. Additional connectors \$8. installed.

C0S No Drive, install your own emb. SCSI drive \$99.

C0 No Drive, MFM controller

C0R No Drive, RLL controller \$299.

20 MB \$415. 30 MB \$465. 40 MB \$595.

49 MB *\$525. 64 MB \$725. 85 MB *\$685.

Cable sets to connect additional 3.5"/5.25" floppies also available, please see catalog.

KEYBOARD KITS:

We noticed quite a lot of interest for our keyboard parts used in the CPU CASE. Keyboard kits consisting of metal bottom case, connecting cable with reset and modified plastic tops on an exchange basis are available separately for \$69., please specify your machine type.

Space limitations don't allow a more detailed descriptions. For complete 20 page catalog contact:

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Mini MIDI Lessons # 1

by Morris G. Miller (El Paso)

Almost everyone has a natural curiosity about MIDI, whether or not there are serious intentions of using it. In this series of mini lessons on MIDI, I will attempt to answer some of the more common questions about it. We will discuss:

What is MIDI? What do I need for MIDI? Do I need to know music to use MIDI? What is a sequencer? What are the differences in keyboards? What does MIDI cost? Why should I do MIDI?

It is almost impossible to discuss music or MIDI without using some of the technical terms of the trade. In this series of studies we will try to say everything in such a way that anyone can understand it. A glossary will be presented to help with the words which may remain in doubt. [Ed: The glossary will appear as the last two installments of this series.]

What is MIDI?

MIDI is an acronym for "Musical Instrument Digital Interface." It is a defined means for interconnecting musical instruments and other related equipment for the reproduction of music. It now includes your computer and the programs for MIDI, keyboards, synthesizers and samplers, sequencers, recorders, editors, librarians, scorers and a host of other equipment and functions.

MIDI is the electrical and physical specifications for these interconnections. It forms the "standards."

The MIDI standards define the hardware connections and wiring to connect and send signals between the instruments, such that one can control or in-

form the other of musical events. The send wire of one connects to the receive of the other, and vice versa.

Signals are sent in serial, much like the serial printer or modem connection on your computer — one wire to send, one wire to receive. On some computers, the MIDI interface plugs into the serial modem port of the computer. On others, the MIDI port is built in as a separate interface.

The serial pulses sent between instruments are organized into 8-bit codes. The MIDI standard defines the meaning of these codes so that all instruments speak the same code language. Not all instruments respond to all the codes defined, but those that respond to any one code all respond in the same manner.

Electronically, MIDI also defines the current and voltage limits of the pulses

and the bit rate for the pulses. In this there are now two standards, but any instrument designed for the faster standard will respond properly to the original, slower standard unless it specifically so states. Not to worry. For what you and I are doing, either of these are sufficient.

The MIDI connections on your instruments are 5-pin DIN. There are three kinds:

MIDI IN -- the instrument can receive MIDI code.

MIDI OUT -- the instrument can send MIDI code.

MIDI THRU -- the instrument can repeat to the next instrument what was received on MIDI IN.

Not all instruments will have all three ports. This is a clue to how that instrument can fit into the MIDI hookup.

The full definitions for MIDI codes are available from many sources and will not be repeated here. Codes are defined for turning each note on and off, the note attack (how hard the key is struck), touch pressure (how hard the key is held down), release (how quickly the key is released), patch changes (selecting the voice to play), pedal control (sustain, soft, etc.), glissando and portamento (glide between notes), modulation (vibrato or tremolo) and others.

Codes are also defined for the individual manufacturer's, called exclusive codes. This allows each manufacturer to have special codes for the control of functions on a keyboard that is different from all other keyboards. It is this "feature" that will prompt you to make some decisions about the type of keyboard to use and the programs to buy before sinking a lot of money into it. The two must work together.



Note that MIDI does *not send the sound* of the notes played. MIDI sends signals to indicate what the *performer did*. MIDI sends codes to indicate which key(s) was pressed, when it was pressed, when it was released, which control was operated and how much it was operated. When played back from the computer, the keys are pressed again exactly the same as before, and the same controls are operated again exactly the same way. Reminiscent of a player piano, no? Only it doesn't have to be a piano. It might be two horns and a banjo. That's neeeet!

What Do I Need for MIDI?

Coming from a computer user this question relates to "what do I need to add in order to use MIDI?" Selecting your computer is another subject, but there are MIDI connections for almost every computer now made. As a matter of fact, many MIDI instruments can be used without a "computer" and have their own computer functions built into them. Many keyboards can record and play back the songs played on them.

For your computer to send a song to the keyboard you will need a sequencer or player program. There are some simple player programs and a few decent sequencers and editors available in the public domain. Commercially available programs are much better, but you pay for what you get. Another lesson will go into more detail about sequencers and editors. Basically, the sequencer will allow you to record a song as you play it, edit mistakes and make musical performance changes, select the voices and play the song back to the synthesizer.

Some computers have plug in card slots. MIDI interface cards are available for MAC, IBM-PC, Apple and others. Synthesizer cards are available for MAC and IBM-PC. If your computer does not have a MIDI interface built in, Apple makes a simple interface to plug into a serial port, but programs to drive it may be a problem.

Synthesizers can be purchased without keyboards. All keyboards have synthesizers in them. It is the keyboard which sends the performance signals to the computer for recording. When played back from the computer it is the synthesizer which makes the voice sounds you hear. You can play any song to a synthesizer whether it has a keyboard or not. Therefore there are two factors involved:

(a) If you know you will seldom be entering notes or playing the keyboard, buy a keyboard looking for the best synthesizer. You'll save enough money on the cheaper keyboard to buy another synthesizer without a keyboard.

(b) Otherwise buy the best keyboard you can, with less regard to the quality of synthesizer it contains. Get a better synthesizer as a separate item.

You will need an amplifier and speaker system. Any good home music system will be great. Add to it an audio mixer for combining the sound output of two to four separate synthesizers

and microphone inputs. Radio Shack has a reasonably good one at a modest price. If your music system has a cassette recorder in it, then all the better. Record your performances and take them with you. You don't have to buy everything at once. When an item is to become permanent to the system, then buy the best you think you can afford.

Do I Need to Know Music to Use MIDI?

Yes. And no. There's nothing like a definitive answer, but the proper answer depends on what you want to do with your MIDI system. It requires no knowledge of music to play pre-recorded songs. You can change the voices, tempo, attack (volume) and many other components of musical character and style having no knowledge of music. You can have someone else play a song while you record it and have no knowledge of music. You can even do a lot of editing to a song with no knowledge of music.

But, it does help.

If you have no knowledge of music, you will be pleasantly surprised how quickly you can learn what you need to know of the rudiments of music once you start entering a new song into an editor. Keep in mind that it is not necessary to "play" a song to enter it into an editor. There are at least a half dozen different ways to get music into a sequencer. Some are easier than others, but others are more suitable to the circumstances than some!

We are not talking about "composing" music or knowing all about chords and patterns. It will be necessary to learn the relative tonal positions of lines and spaces on the musical staves. It will be necessary to learn what note shape has to do with time and duration. It will be necessary to recognize the markings in the time and key signature of a score.

All this should take about an hour of talking to your daughter, who has been taking those expensive piano lessons — and the next three days to enter your first two simple songs.

After that it's all downhill.

Pre-recorded songs can give hours (literally) of great pleasure by the nominal process of examining them in the edit buffer of the sequencer and finding for yourself what the affects are.

Have that daughter play the song while you record it — mistakes matter not. Play with the editor until all notes are like the score. This will quickly let you see for yourself how the notes correspond to position on the staff, how shape relates to duration and how the signature affects the individual note pitch — and how quickly 10 PM can arrive! Assign voices, adjust tempo, set the MIDI channel, set up the synth patches and presto! New song.

Yes, you will need to know some "music." You do not need to know music theory. What you need to know at a minimum, you can learn very quickly by doing. Just don't burst out singing too loud! Happy MIDI.

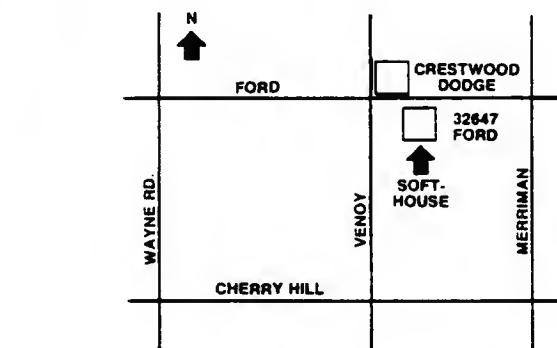


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Computer User Spouse Strikes!

by Robert Hodson (El Paso)

After reading "NeoSTAG struck by Virus" in AIM, September 1989, it occurred to me that there is a virus out there that has struck all avid users.

Symptoms

Hearing the parts of sentences, such as...married to that computer...speaking to the wall...last time I'm calling you... and many, many more. Seeing a hand on the power switch after hours of work and hearing "SAVE IT or LOSE IT." Telling your spouse you'll be gone to the computer store/friend's house one or two

hours and being gone for four or more.

It seems that if you're branded a computer enthusiast you will eventually be bitten with this sleeper. At first, I tried to find some kind of immunization for it.

Cures

Posting the following sign above my workstation worked for 48 hours only. This virus has no quick cure.

REMEMBER
COMPUTERS ARE NOT
WARM, LOVING, OR
UNDERSTANDING.
ONLY YOUR WIFE IS THERE
FOREVER!

After which, I would sense a presence

akin to the grim reaper pointing to the sign.

Instantly save, shut down and say "Yes Honey, what do you need?" knowing that this time you did not even hear part of a sentence.

Next came getting up early Saturday and Sunday mornings, closing the bedroom door and putting a box over the printer (if absolutely needed).

One other short-time remedy is to have your spouse take a trip while you're attending a school — any school will do. This will be the only time you can get some kind of remission. Be forewarned, there is no permanent cure, only trying to work toward harmony. Beware!

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AtariWriter + Part V for Those Who Don't Want to Read the Book

by Jimmy Boyce (CACE)

Hi people! How's the old heater doing? Are we having fun yet in this cold? You say, "Who cares, just tell me how to create my own personal dictionary?" My, my...aren't we edgy?

Why a personal dictionary? Mainly because AW+'s dictionary is so small. Another reason is that you may have a specialized vocabulary. An electronics technician, dentist, inventor or teacher of a special subject will each have need for a personal dictionary. If you have more than one specialized subject, you can make a dictionary for each subject.

There are two ways of going about this process. You can run a document through the spell check and then go back to menu and select FILE PERSONAL DICTIONARY or you can just create a list of words and save them.

Creating a Personal Dictionary using Corrected Words

So, let's see what is involved in saving words from a document that you have just checked for spelling <pg 57>. Keep in mind that as you are running a file through the Proofreader and you tell the computer to accept as correct a corrected word, that word is maintained in memory. When you are returned to the menu, press the key that gives you the File Personal Dictionary function in order to save this list of words (the list in memory).

At this point the computer will prompt you for a file name. I like PERDIC followed by a number, such as PERDIC1 or PERDIC2. This way, if you exceed the

maximum allowed words (256 words per personal dictionary file), you still have continuity with the dictionary.

Now, insert a formatted disk (you know how to format a disk for AW+) into your drive and hit [RETURN]. If the file exists, you will be asked if you wish to replace the old file, if not press [N] and start over with a new name for your file.

Here is the nifty part of this whole rigamarole (that ought to mess up the Proofreader but good) -- you will be prompted with SELECT WHICH WORDS TO STORE? Y/N. If you select [Y], you can choose the words, letters, abbreviations and numbers that you wish to save. Each time a word flashes on the screen you will be asked if you wish to save it. Just type a [Y] or [N] to save or discard each word.

Now that you are done with the list, you are asked to press [RETURN] TO CONTINUE. I assume you can follow directions and you did indeed press [RETURN]. You will notice that your drive started running. Guess what? Your new personal dictionary is being saved.

Please remember that if your list is OVER 256 words long ONLY the first 256 words will be saved. If you have a list of over 256 words, save it as a regular AW+ file and split it up with the "saving a portion of a file" technique mentioned on <pg 28>. Then save it to your Dictionary disk (that will be discussed next).

If you type an [N] when asked SELECT WHICH WORDS TO STORE? Y/N, the entire list is saved and that is the end of the procedure.

Building a Dictionary Manually

Let's say that you already know that

the technical terms you will be using are not in the AW+ dictionary, and you want to get a jump on things and create your own files without using the previous method. Here it is folks: first create a file containing all the specialized words you use. Your options are to create a column with a [RETURN] after each word or just type them with a space between each word. Then, just save this like you would any file but put it on your dictionary file disk with an appropriate file name. Isn't that just precious!

There are a few ground rules and they are quite simple to deal with. Start each word with a letter. Do not use punctuation marks, parentheses, or numbers at the beginning of a word. Proofreader will accept ['] in a contraction such as "he'll" or "aren't."

Do not enter contractions showing possession such as "she's." Also, remember that your dictionary can contain up to 256 words (130XE owners -- your list can be up to 628 words).

Using a Personal Dictionary

Let's move on to proofreading with personal dictionary files <pg 59>. Go to the main menu and gently depress the [V] key to verify the spelling of your document. Remember when it says to insert the program disk and press [RETURN], in reality it means leave the AW+ program disk in your drive because PROOFREADER is on that side of the disk.

When the PROOFREADER menu appears on the screen, you must gently strike the [A] key to add your personal dictionary. Now that was not too bad was it? Oh, I almost forgot...you must type in the name of your dictionary file (I

use PERDIC1) at the prompt at the bottom of your screen and hit [RETURN]. This gets your part of the dictionary into memory so you can use it.

At this time, if you have another dictionary to load then do so, because you should be back at the menu with a notice telling you how many words you loaded last time and asking you to make another selection from the menu. Just repeat the process and the next list of words is loaded.

If you try to load more words than there is allotted memory space for, you will be told that you goofed with a terse little message saying MEMORY FULL — INCOMPLETE LOAD. However, if you have been fortunate and all has gone well, ask the computer to correct your spelling by depressing the [C] key and inserting the AW+ dictionary disk in your drive (don't try to jam that disk in without removing the other one first!).

Updating A Personal Dictionary

OK, you have corrected your sloppy spelling and keyboard work. Now let's update that dictionary disk. As a reminder <pg57>, each time that you correct the spelling of a word that is not on the regular dictionary disk, that word is saved in memory. These words can be added to your personal dictionary when you have completed your spell-checking in the following way: when you have completed spell-checking and have been returned to the Proofreader Menu, depress the [F] key for File Personal Dic-

tionary and you will be asked for a filename.

At this point, let me tell you something I discovered about this process. For some reason if you save your dictionary file with the same filename as before, you will have a double list of your words in that file. So, here is what I do to eliminate the problem:

Step 1 Save the file with another name (e.g., PERDIC2 assuming that your original file was called PERDIC1).

Step 2 Delete the original file (PERDIC1).

Step 3 Reload PERDIC2.

Step 4 Save PERDIC2 with the new name PERDIC1.

Step 5 Delete PERDIC2.

This may sound a bit much, but it will leave your disk uncluttered. Plus, making it easier to load your dictionary next time, because you will not have to remember which file is which.

The next thing you will be asked is if you want to select the words you want to save. I always tell it [Y] just so I can eliminate anything I do not wish to have on the disk. One final note: save the file while in the Proofreader program because some of the 130XE's do not respond when returning to AW+ and your corrected file is lost upon re-booting AW+.

That's about the sum and substance of checking your spelling. Remember that your personal dictionary is limited to 256 words (for 130XE owners the limit is 628 words). That's it for now. Next month, we start printing the corrected file that you have just saved.



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M.U.L.E. -- A Look at an 8bit Classic

by David Brzezinski (WAUG)

Imagine the joys of colonizing a new world. Then imagine the problems of producing food, energy and materials and competing with other pioneers for prime land and scarce supplies.

This is the basic concept of the game M.U.L.E. presented by Electronic Arts. This isn't a new game (it is copyrighted 1983), but I've found it to be one of my all-time favorites.

So what does M.U.L.E. offer? You are colonizing the planet Irata with three other characters. If you play alone, the computer plays the other three. If you use two joysticks, you and a friend can play against the computer. With a joystick and paddles, three people can play. This is the best I can do with my 130XE.

A friend who originally showed me this software has an Atari 800 with four joystick ports. With that, people can play all four characters, eliminating the computer from play, which prevents the all too common disappointment of having the computer win.

Play goes from six (beginner) to twelve (tournament) rounds. A lot happens in a round, so be sure to leave enough time to play it through. A land grant beginning each round allows players to choose a plot of land from a rectangular area to be developed.

M.U.L.E.s (Multiple Use Labor Elements) are bought at the store and outfitted to perform specific tasks such as farming, mining and energy production and placed on a piece of land. Since the colony must be self sufficient, food and energy become important as the store

runs out. Smithore, produced by mining, is used to make more M.U.L.E.s.

Once every round, the players go to market with whatever they have produced. In this market, players are allowed to buy and sell to each other at any acceptable price, or sell to the store at a fixed price. If the store does not have a particular product, players are forced to purchase from their fellow players at whatever price is asked.

This market portion, cleverly done with graphics, takes up most of the time in the game, but offers the real opportunities for strategy. It is possible to corner the market in certain essential products and drive the price up to ridiculous levels before you sell.

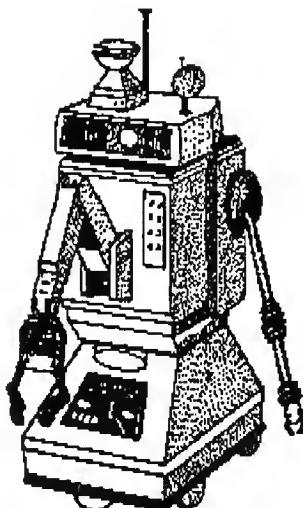
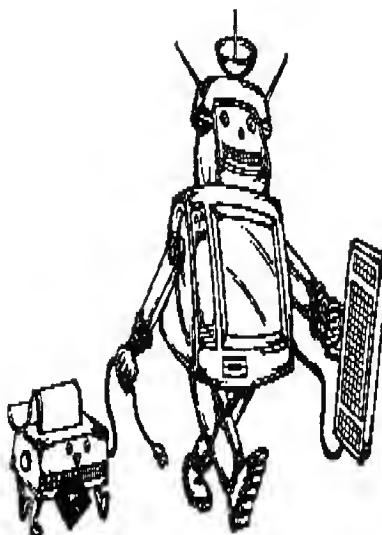
If you really get stuck or pull too far ahead of the pack, there is a whole range of good and bad things that occur to level things out again — from pirates to packages from home. There are natural disasters to shake things up too. And, to pick up a few extra bucks, you can

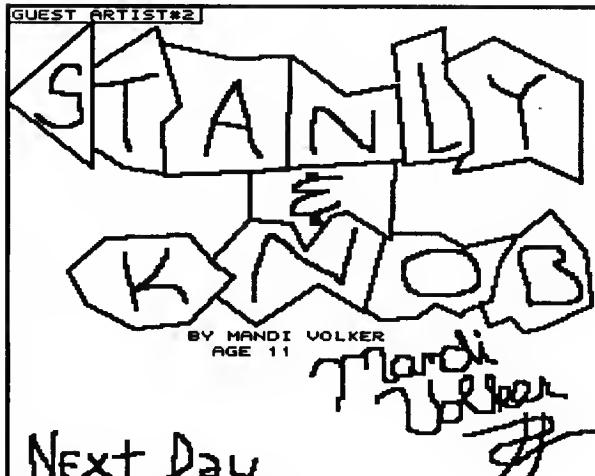
always go Wampus hunting, if you can spare the time allowed during your round.

The point of the game is to become "First Founder," the wealthiest member of a successful colony. Surprisingly, the computer does very well, although I can usually beat it. My son, 10 years old, likes the game nearly as much as I do and doesn't seem to have any problems with the market aspects of the game.

The graphics and sounds are amusing and entertaining and the joystick manipulations are not overly trying. Don't try to play on a monochrome monitor, since just about everything is color coded.

All in all, I recommend this game to any 8-bit owner, especially you Atari 800 owners that can play all four characters. I really like the idea that the whole family can participate at once. I would hope that someone is working on Return of M.U.L.E. or something similar. I imagine it could even be a best-seller on the ST, if Electronic Arts would make an ST version. Anyone at EA listening?





Knob: Guess what?
You're going to Computer
School!

Stan: School!!? No!

I think I'm going to be
sick!

Next Day

Knob: I've looked through all these manuals and I
can't find a thing on your sickness!

Stanley: (secretively) I know- I'm such a good
faker!

Special Offer!

Beginning in January, 1990, Atari Interface Magazine will offer an ST/Mega Disk of the Month. This double-sided disk will be crammed full of the latest public domain and Shareware programs from sources such as CompuServe, GENie, Delphi, Usenet and overseas sources in Germany and the UK. Each disk will also contain a short article that describes the contents of the disk.

These disks will be made available on a month-by-month basis for \$6 per disk (shipping included) and non-AIM subscribers will be able to select an "AIM Disk-Only Subscription" for \$60/year (a \$12 savings).

But, if you subscribe to Atari Interface Magazine, you can get the ST/Mega Disk of the Month for ONLY \$50/year! That's like getting over three disks ABSOLUTELY FREE! To take advantage of this new disk offer, fill in the appropriate items below (as well as your name and address on the above form).

YES, I wish to receive your ST/Mega Disk of the Month. I am an Atari Interface Magazine subscriber.

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Please sign me up for your ST/Mega Disk of the Month Only Subscription. I do not wish to subscribe to AIM.

Payment in Full Enclosed (\$60) Installment Plan: \$30 enclosed, bill for balance

.ACCESS!

by Bill Rayl

The ingenuity of ST programmers simply amazes me at times, and this is definitely one of them.

.ACCess!, from Rock Digital, is a handy desk accessory (DA) that gives you all the flexibility of a Command Line Interpreter (CLI). With .ACCess!, you can copy/delete/renamce/move files, get disk directories, copy files and more from within any GEM program allowing access to the GEM menu bar.

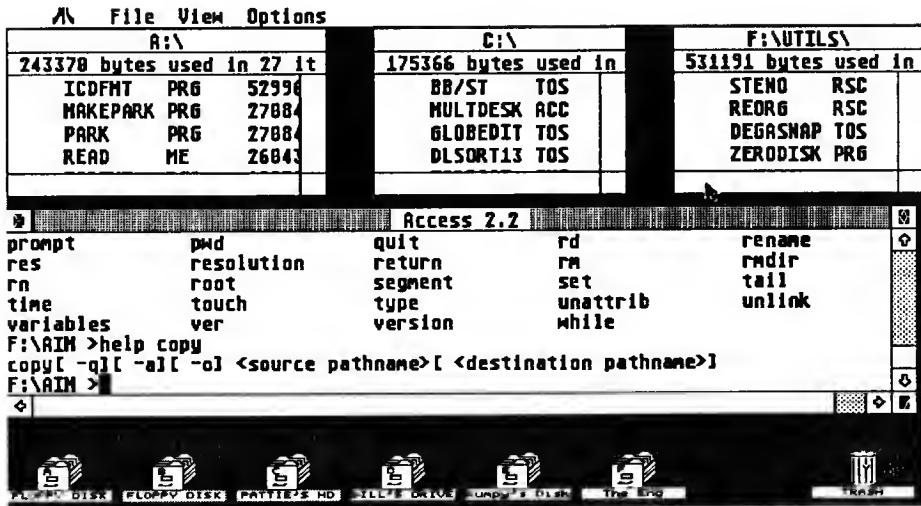
Sure, there are a number of desk accessories available that allow you to do those things, as well. But, .ACCess! has many more features...and .ACCess! gives you a CLI within a GEM window. You can resize the window, drag it to one corner of your screen and be able to switch back and forth from .ACCess! to your program.

You can create "batch" files and run them from within .ACCess!, and though "not supported" by Rock Digital, .ACCess! can execute TOS and TTP programs, often "tricking" them to run *inside* the .ACCess! GEM window. You can even run some GEM programs from within this desk accessory!

In a word, .ACCess! is...umm...elegant. Yea...it's elegant. It's kinda cute, too.

And for all you memory misers who refuse to use desk accessories, Rock Digital has kindly provided a TOS version of their program. You won't get the GEM window, and the added flexibility that comes with that window, but you do get a first-rate Command Line Interpreter.

If you're a user of programs such as



DCopy or a "DOS Shell" program, you surely appreciate the added power and flexibility of a CLI...especially for file manipulation. If you've never used a CLI or worked in an MS-DOS environment, and never felt a need for more than what the ST desktop has to offer, you may not need what .ACCess! has to offer.

Just try copying over 100 files from one folder on drive A to a different folder three levels deep on a hard drive using the standard desktop, and you'll understand immediately how useful a product like .ACCess! can be.

With the unique feature of being the ONLY CLI (known to me) in a GEM window, .ACCess! becomes doubly useful.

For example, I was recently leaving a message on CompuServe and found I needed to quote from a text file I had previously stored on my hard drive. Using .ACCess!, I was able to type the file out and, while viewing the quote in the .ACCess! window, I added it to the message on CompuServe.

Without .ACCess!, I would have had two options. I could have used the VIEW

command in Flash! to type the file to my screen, written down or memorized the quote and then typed it in.

Or, I could have loaded the text into the Flash! capture buffer (after saving what I already had loaded there), found the quote I wanted, separated it from the surrounding text with carriage returns, selected the quote as a block of text and then uploaded it directly into the CompuServe message.

All this for a couple lines of text. Makes me tired just writing about it!

In all, nearly 40 commands, 22 programming functions and 12 control flow/batch processing keywords are available via .ACCess!. Rock Digital has produced a desk accessory that is both highly useful and very innovative. Check this one out!

Rock Digital
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(513) 254-3160

F-16 Combat Pilot by Digital Integration

by Steve Kendrick

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"You fight like you train." —Motto, TOP GUN.

To put it simply, F-16 is a combat flight simulator. Then again, if you think about it, Dungeon Master is a fantasy game and Starglider is a space shoot-em-up. What elevates this new European import to the level of these classic titles is the way that it does its job, providing a state-of-the-art simulation as well as a novel strategic aspect, throwing in a few new bells and whistles too.

The F-16 Fighting Falcon is an intimidating air weapon, combining a multi-role interceptor, night-fighter, all weather aircraft, and adding an offensive capability as well. It can carry night-vision/targeting aides, reconnaissance equipment and a variety of state of the art air to air and air to ground weapons. Inside is the latest HUD [heads up display], avionics and electronic warfare devices. Powerful turbofan jets hurl the plane at supersonic speeds. Of course the F-16 pilot's job is no cakewalk, for the opposition sport skilled pilots and capable aircraft as well. Victory in the skies goes to the wiliest, most skilled pilot.

The video incarnation of the F-16 is no less impressive. Inside the cockpit are three main MFD [multi-function displays]. Unlike other simulators, these state of the art displays can be configured to provide a variety of navigational, radar

and other displays and be re-assigned as the combat situation changes. All of the other instruments are colorful and realistically rendered. You can look about the canopy, with side and rear views accessible via the cursor keys.

The graphics aren't quite as flashy as Spectrum Holobyte's F-16 Falcon, but are competently done, with a minimum of display bogginess or awkward jumping. Control is touchy but responsive; your aircraft responds to your instructions without a noticeable lag and that "flying through molasses" feeling that many other simulations have. The joystick works the best, but you will probably prefer the keyboard controls for the fine positioning on a runway approach.

Upon booting, you first get a colorful title/credits screen. You are then presented a graphic representation of the squadron commander's office, where you select the various options by mouse [clicking on the pilot for a quickstart game, the filing cabinet for accessing your pilot data, et cetera]. You can call up colorful renditions of enemy aircraft and available weapons spec diagrams, as well as a demonstration. After saving a record of your pilot on a scratch disk, you click on the exit door to go to mission selection.

There are five main options available at the missions selection screen, as well as TRAINING EXERCISES [goofing these doesn't affect your pilot's condition] as well as GLADIATOR [one on one vs. a human on another ST via null modem]. These missions are:

Hammerblow: attack of enemy air installations and defenses, such as SAM [surface to air missile] sites, early warning radar arrays and enemy intelligence installations.

Deepstrike: attack against enemy logistics assets — fuel dumps, factories and power stations.

Tankbuster: strike against enemy armored battalions.

Watchtower: reconnaissance mission over various enemy sites.

Scramble: interception of enemy aircraft.

Successful completion of each of these missions at least once allows you to attempt Operation Conquest, a campaign scenario. In this scenario, you are the squadron commander, charged with the reduction of enemy fighting capability. It is up to you to devise a suitable strategy, selecting both your missions and the missions of up to four other allied aircraft.

Selecting an option brings up the map box, depicting the combat theatre. You receive your target coordinates [if you've selected a specific scenario], weather and intelligence report, and target data. You can select your WAYPOINTS [which when fed to your navigation computer provide your course to target] as well as assign missions to your fighter group in the campaign scenario.

After selecting a mission and making a flight plan, you go to weapons selection, a realistic-appearing rendition of your aircraft being readied in the hangar. You have a menu of systems [which may or may not be in stock] which you place on the appropriate hardpoints [weapon mounts] of your craft.

There is a wide selection of weapons at your disposal: AIM-9M short-range infrared-homing and AMRAAM medium-range radar-homing air-to-air missiles; Maverick infra-red and laser-guided air-to-ground missiles; DURANDAL anti-runway bombs; HARM anti-

radar missiles and several weights of unguided bombs. Also accessible is your M61A1 Vulcan air-to-air autocannon, your internal fuel tankage as well as expendable external drop tanks, anti-radar chaff and anti-IR flare charges, ATARS reconnaissance pod and LANTIRN target designation/night vision pods.

You select what you need, and then it's off to the runway! You type in your IFF transponder code [identification, friend or foe] — yes it's the ubiquitous manual look-up copy protection. Send your callsign to the control tower and receive the response "Roger, PEGASUS, clear for takeoff." Taxi onto the runway, set the wheel brake, then slam the throttle full open, feel the afterburners kick, pull back the control stick at 150 MPH and you are airborne....

Success at any of the missions involves the mastery of three separate skills: flight management, use of instruments, and resources management. Flight management involves all the skills of handling the aircraft, such as takeoffs [pretty easy], landings [tough!], attack maneuvers and aerobatics. Most important of these are bomb run approaches, enemy tail lock-on strategies and low altitude maneuvers — you have to fly at less than 500 feet to avoid enemy ground radar detection [and subsequent SAM and interceptor attacks].

Practice also confers the ability to execute escape maneuvers that will put you in a more advantageous position, without slamming into the ground at supersonic speeds or conking out the pilot with excessive g-forces. You can get a feel of how the aircraft responds to the variables of airspeed, altitude and angle of attack [how much work the wing must do to keep you airborne]. The fly-by-wire system, which translates your control inputs to commands to the aircraft control surfaces without pilot intervention, keeps you from making many maneuvering errors but it is still possible to goof up. Landing in itself is a difficult task, and you will probably prefer to turn landing over to the avionics with the AUTOLAND key. This takes the ILS glide-slope radio beam information and controls the aircraft for a safe landing.

You must also learn to use your instruments to their best advantage. It is possible to get swamped in too much information, so it is best to have your MFDs configured to provide only the necessary data. Overuse of your radio or radar transmitter is to be avoided, as this can alert the enemy to your activities. Keeping to a well-devised flight plan can help you avoid unnecessary conflicts with enemy defenses and keep you on-course to your mission objective.

Resources management is a crucial but often-overlooked aspect of combat. A flight plan and weapons selection that does the most for the least work is obviously very desirable. It is much easier to complete a mission when you conserve fuel and slip in and out without interception. Being overladen with heavy weapons impairs your ability to maneuver and evade attack. Taking good weapons and using them efficiently can avoid many headaches. Firing a fire-and-forget air-to-air missile, or using your LANTIRN pod with a laser homing warhead, can keep you out

of those hairy close encounters. Maintaining appropriate airspeed and altitude makes you more maneuverable, keeps you out of radar lock and puts you in a position to strike without making yourself vulnerable. This also makes it much easier to avoid getting yourself lost, disoriented or in hot water. I would say that 75% of your success comes from these, and raw reflexes and skills do the rest.

Before I give you the misconception that this is the "perfect game," I need to point out some shortcomings. This game is copy-protected and comes on two 360K disks. Read this as a lot of disk swaps, even if you have a hard drive or second drive [the software doesn't recognize a B drive]. The book-based protection scheme is irksome. You have to look up a code on every mission, a level of protection that is both unnecessary and needlessly annoying.

The graphics are not at the edge of the state of the art, although they are competent, and there are no digitized sound effects that one finds on other simulators running on one Meg or bigger machines. There is a flaw in the random map generator — I have seen a map which has a river with no outlet! The manual is talky and at times uneven in organization and content, and I feel that many helpful hints and even very important information is omitted and I wish for more illustrative examples. There are a fistful of keys that you must know to use the program too, and sometimes the program fails to recognize key inputs.

However, don't let this dissuade you from acquiring this title. The manual does a good job of providing colorful background information and important data about the workings of your plane and weapons. The graphics shortfall is more than made up for by the many options available. You have a lot of choices available in the five scenarios, and an almost inexhaustible replay value in the campaign scenarios, a feature that I have not seen in any other flight simulation.

There is a high level of realism, with enemy aircraft, weather and other conditions acting in the expected way. You can't help but feel that you are actually flying — a padded flight couch, G-suit and some aviation fuel fumes are all that are necessary to complete the illusion. Thoughtful touches abound, from the way the instruments respond to the "warhead's eye view" video display.

This is a must-buy for any simulation buff. It is a well-planned and integrated package, and it makes me look forward to the next wave of European software simulators. Happy MiG-hunting!

System Requirements: 520ST, Color
Ratings on a scale of 1-10

Graphics: 8

Sound: 6

User interface: 7

Documentation: 7

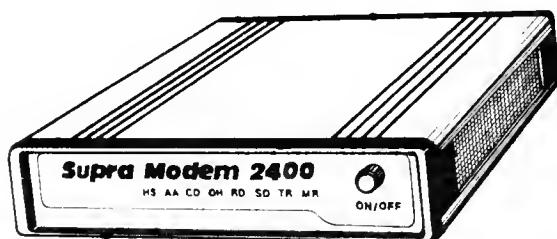
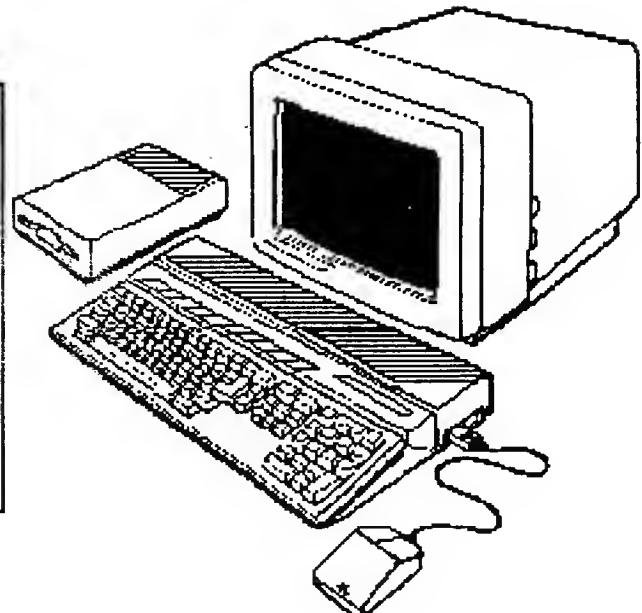
Longevity: 10

Overall rating: 8

520ST System

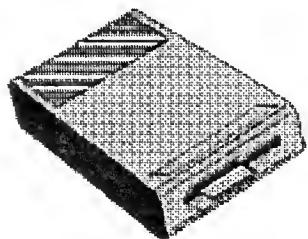
\$549

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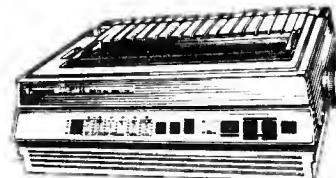
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ATARI CLUBS OF DENVER

The Atari Club of Denver's November Meeting

It was a darned and stormy night. Suddenly a DOS rang out. A door slammed. The maid screamed! Suddenly, a pirate BBS appeared on the horizon!

Yeah, so the above is a direct copy of the first minutes I ever wrote for the ACCD over (gulp!) three years ago! And I'm still looking for a gullible victim to take over this job!

As we all know, November is when we make nominations for suckers to take on officer jobs. The usual gang of nominees were/are Paul Mirci for Librarian, Guy McDaniel as Treasurer (Since Guy has increased our funds to an unprecedented high, this remains a necessity!), Tom Iowa as Executive Director, no-one wanted Secretary, Chet for Emperor, and Jerry Mathers as the Beaver. Refreshments were served and games were played.

The game was "How in the name of Fuji can we get Diamond Write to WORK?!@*!" Diamond, which showed as an excellent operating environment (Looks just like GEM and permits LOTS of memory to be addressed -- up to 16 meg!) in current and previous demonstrations, failed to do anything when it came to its own word processor! Wait until version 2.0 or more before throwing money away to Diamond Write.

Club business? Well, we determined to donate an XEGS to the 3430th Technical Training Group at Lowry Air Force Base for their Christmas door prize. (Yeah, we know the value of publicity when we see it!) We'd already donated one to a local school, and we decided (Sure we voted on it, but aren't you as tired of seeing the word "vote" all the time? Sure you are!) to follow up with similar donations and volunteers to speak and/or tutor local students on the Friendly Computers. (You can't convince me that there are friendlier computers than our Ataris, whether 800, XL, XE, or ST. Even the Mac and Amiga line have their user-nastiness.)

Paul and Mike spoke at length about the new club BBS, and begged for extra equipment. (Oops! I forgot to give Paul that printer cable!) The board will be run on an XE, but will probably be carrying a lot of ST stuff (Should that be "STuff"?) too. And Mike gave us more of the low-down of our absorption into AIM (which you should be reading this in, so there shouldn't be too much question about what AIM is... unless you're just not paying attention. Go look at the cover and the contents page, then come back here.), and what we can expect to get away with. Everyone voted to subversively take over all of AtariLand, starting with AIM, and then rule the world.

After we rule the world, maybe THEN we can get the parking lot fixed at our meeting place!

Chet

The Last.... Power of Babble by Wesley Crusher

Sadly enough this may be my last column for awhile. But, you never know.

Da' Dudes Since Mike has been a twit there are no more director's meetings until he gets a real personality.

Da'Club Unfortunately I was unable to attend the great M.U.L.E. tournament. I was busy with my new business opportunity (see the ad section below). But from what I hear, Mr. Ed and Friend got into a big fight. Mr. Ed's nose was broken. And it was the best meeting ever! Should have been there. By the way, the winner of the game was an unknown radical dude.

Da'Stuff With the help of Greg, I have been in the process of putting a few new Starfleet Icon disks together. Come in and see what we've got!

BBS News and Blues NEWS!! A new BBS is up and I am part of it! This new BBS is called TERMINAL FROST, run by John Falcon-*fytr, Lord Warduke, Styxx, Visigoth and myself. Come and see what all the excitement is about. 24hrs a day, 7 days a week! Running BBS Express PRO! at () 355-1933

NEWS!! A new BBS is up and I was not asked to help! The ATARI CLUBS OF DENVER have a new BBS up and I am not part of the growing process! It is for library requests, news and things like that. The SysOps are the Atari Club's librarian Paul and of course Mike. The number is () 699-2673.

And now, a Word from your local sponsor...

THE WRATH OF WESLEY

December will be my last month as president. Thereafter, I will only hold the low-life job of Librarian. But, I would just like to be serious for a moment with y'all. I would first like to give my thanks to Chuck for nominating me to VP that lead to my present post. I would like to thank Mike for the advise and crud he gave me. I would like to thank all of Starfleet for their support. I would like to thank all of those who have worked on the newsletter since I have been with the club. Without them the Power of Babble would have never made it on the air.

Enough of the thanks. I will still be around and maybe Babble will continue if there is enough support. Remember all of us need to support the ATARI before it really does die.

So for now, goodbye cruel world. I cannot live no more. Good-bye, good-bye, I will now take my own life with a phaser. Good-bye.

At the December 5, 1989 meeting,
the Atari Club of Denver will hold a drawing for a

Free XE Game System

Tickets for this drawing will be given to
Paid Members Only.

Members must be present to win.

Only one ticket per membership will be issued.
If we get enough support for this, we may have regular
drawings for \$50+ hardware and software items.



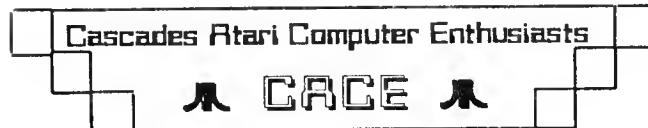
From the Prez: Our November meeting was held on the 13th and 'lo and behold', new members! Some of the topics covered were the news that ST developers have formed their 'self defense' group and that Artisan Software's Revolution may have great potential.

On the ComputerFestival, I would like to thank all those who helped out to make our booth the success it was. We had many folks stop by to say hello and had some new and renewed interest in the club's direction. Those plans include having the SIGs during the regular meetings, planning excursions to local businesses and industries that utilize computers in their daily operations, and bringing in people to speak on various computer related topics. So all in all, 1990 should be a very good year for ACCT.

Our December meeting will not be held, but our annual Christmas party will take place on Dec. 10th at the Temperance, MI. branch of the Peoples Savings Bank from 1 to 6 pm (We eat at 3 pm).

During this season of good cheer I would like to wish the staff at Unicorn Publications all the best for next year. To all the participating and affiliated clubs a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and may 1990 bring to you great success plus renewed strength in membership and interest in your clubs and these great computers from Atari.

REMEMBER — DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE



Cascades Atari Computer Enthusiasts is the Atari Club in and around the Jackson County area. The main purpose of the club is to help inform new users, and to promote the use of the Atari Computer in the community.

President	Brent Fisher	(517) 764-4599
Vice-President	Tim Hotchkiss	522-8912
Secretary	Joe Cripps	782-0199
Treasurer	Craig Schaff	787-3970

The C.A.C.E. BBS, is run by the club and is open to anyone with a modem. The number to call is 1-517-787-4011. The current membership dues are \$14.80 per year, and are payable at any of the C.A.C.E. monthly meetings, or by mail to the P.O. Box. Club membership includes access to the entire club software and publication libraries, along with a monthly published newsletter.

Any written communication with C.A.C.E. should be sent to: P.O. Box 6161, Jackson, MI 49204. Our meetings are held on the second Sunday of the month, from 1 pm to approx. 4 pm. The meetings take place in the basement of the East Side Lounge at 2214 East Ganson, Jackson, Mi.

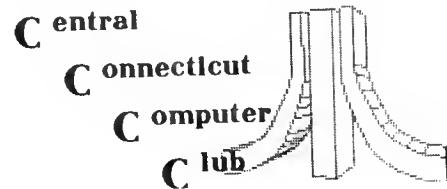
Fishin' Around by Brent Fisher

Well guys, I don't quite know what to say, but it looks as though our meeting place is no more. Well not quite. It seems that the last couple of months that we have tried to have a meeting at the East Side Lounge, they have been closed on Sunday. So our only recourse it seems will be to have the meeting in a different place or choose another date. Our open possibilities appear to be: Craig Schaff's house at least for the December meeting, possibly moving back to the Boo's Center in Loomis Park or just changing the meeting day to Saturday. In any event I'll give you all a call to let you know what will be up. The next meeting will take place on either Saturday December 9th, or Sunday December 10th.

After reading a recent issue of Zmag I read some disturbing news. In issue 179 Matt Ratcliff has reported that ANALOG will cease publication with the December issue. This definately bodes bad for those of us who loved that great programs that ANALOG has published over the years. Well maybe we can all get our subscriptions back. Either that or Larry Flynt converts them all to Hustler subscriptions.

I'm afraid that this month is a dry month for the writers. Not that we are having a writers strike or anything, it is just that no one seems to have anything to say to their adoring fans and public. Well since the responce to what I said about the Hybrid Arts MIDI sale seemed to just bounce off of everyone's head, I'm not going to worry, just enjoy.

So one and all happy holidays, especially if you all get this before January.



The Central Connecticut Computer Club is the oldest, still operational Atari club in the state. Conceived in December of 1980, and operational in January of 1981, the CCCC continues to serve the Atari community. New blood is welcomed, and of course, old hands are always welcomed back.

Meetings of the CCCC are on the third Wednesday of each month. The meets kick off at 7:30 and usually include presentations or demos of various hardware or software items. The meetings are held at Eastern Computer Video, 1207 Meriden-Waterbury Turnpike, Milldale, Ct. 06467.

Prospective members may call Rich Scheidel (203)589-9035 or 589-3738. Failing that, call Tim Brandt, (203)283-0500, or write, CCCC, 127 Pinnacle Rd., Bristol, Ct. 06010.

Dues are \$25.00 per year, \$30.00 for family plan. Includes Voting membership, Newsletter, access to Club library (8-bit and ST), access to Club magazine library, discounts on computer and video supplies at Eastern Computer-Video, and access to the Club message base at Ultra Project BBS.

Greetings! Welcome back, my friends, to the show that never ends. My nation-wide quest for a used 1040 color system for a friend has ended successfully. Thanks to all that responded. I'm about to do it all again, this time for the club. It was sad that we

had several club members show up with demos and had no computer to use them. I really didn't expect it so I didn't bring my Mega. I DID have a load of paperwork to be read and voted on by the members concerning club business. So I apologize to the members and WILL arrange for a computer to be onhand for the next meet.

What happened at the meeting, November 15th? Well, let's see. The club voted to enroll in AIM's disk o' the month deal, we got back the library (ST) and will be in the process of revamping everything to a double sided format to save on disks, of course. We had a look at the infamous GCR, and sadly, I mean just a look. Remember, I didn't bring the computer. So, we discussed Spectre GCR and passed around the manual. Then, while we were on the subject of Dave Small, our 8bit librarian Tim Brandt mentioned something about a dream machine that may soon be underway at Gadgets....a plug in 68030 cartridge. This possibility and all the additions that could accompany it set the scene for the balance of the evening. We even envisioned a few extras to include in the project as well, such as including a three position switch to select the desired Operating System. Imagine that...just like our old 8bits. We could have TOS, or maybe Spectre GCR, or even the pc Ditto II in addition to the 68030 along with double or triple the ram available now. How about utilizing those 1.44 or 2.8 Eye-Bee-Yem floppy drives? The possibilities boggle my wallet.

Also worth mentioning is the fact our Membership IS starting to trickle back. Having a newsletter that is entertaining and produced reliably is having a definite impact. I saw issues of AIM (from our members) at TWO other locations that sponsor Users Groups. A sad note. One of Connecticut's most prestigious Atari headquarters, 20th Century TV in East Hartford, has announced they are closing their doors forever. We wish Brian and the employees of 20th all the best for the future. We also wish to extend a helping hand to STATUS and invite them to attend CCCC meetings every 3rd Wednesday until they are situated again. We would especially like to see this happen so as to feel out the whole club's reaction to going to a state-wide organization.

The next meetings will be December 20th and then January 17th. Remember, renewals and elections will be held in January. Club dues are going to be reduced the next year to because the officers feel we owe the membership a year's worth of newsletters (besides that, I just feel like playing Santa Claus. Hell, I already have the beard).

Nationwide pitch....does anyone know of a 520STFM on the cheap for a club to purchase? Central Conn. Computer Club needs its own ST. If you have one, reply by mail to Rich Scheidel (Yankee Rich) 127 Pinnacle Rd., Bristol, CT 06010 or look me up on Sunday night at the Compuserve Atari8 conference after 9pm. I will usually be there or someone WILL pass the info to me for you.

I now return control of this newsletter to you...see you next time....zbye.



President	Norman Moore	(503) 447-3598
Vice President	Jim Downes	(503) 382-0123
Treasurer/Editor	Glenn Dulin	(503) 382-3956
Secretary	Nancy Kanski	(503) 548-8201

Address: PO Box 6842 Bend, OR 97708. Membership dues are \$1 a month and \$1 a year for each additional family member. We meet every second Saturday of the month at 5 pm at the Ann Rita Conference Center, which lies just in front of St. Charles Hospital on Neff Road in Bend.

Well, we didn't have nominations at the November meeting. We felt we had too small a group. Probably by the time you read this, we will have had our December elections. In January's AIM, we will list the newly elected officers, including a new office, more on this later.

There is quite a delay time relative to what is happening or what we need to convey to our members and the time that the AIM newsletter gets to us. I'm not complaining about AIM; we are just going to have to think and do farther into the future than we are used to. We have discussed moving our club meeting to later in the month so that we would get the newsletter before hand, but this leaves us with normally sending our stuff to AIM with no information about decisions made in that month. Either way, we are going to be a month behind.

We are going to establish an 8bit Vice President with the hopes that this may help the club organization to provide more attention and support for the 8bitters. The STs are gradually taking over, but we still have 8bit users who need help from the top. The ST people are pretty tight, and we do a lot of sharing information and helping each other out. The ST people also seem to be those who more consistently show up at the meetings. If the 8bitters fail to get together and communicate with one another then, I assume you don't want to.

Here is a special message from Marc Hitson: We are initiating a special interest group for users of 8bit computers. If any of you 8bit users out there have any input regarding programs you want to see or any problems you would like resolved -- bring ideas and questions to the next COAC meeting, or call Mark Hitson or his daughter Gretchen at 548-0513, anytime.

We want to support the 8bitters too. By the way, most of those with STs have owned 8bit machines, so go ahead, pick their brains too!

Glenn

For Sale
ASTRA Big D \$275
Dual Double Sided Disk Drive
New... hardly used...
Call (313) 973-8825



GKAUG meets the second Saturday of each month at 11:30 AM in the Arcade Center Star World, 6151 S. Westnedge Ave. Kalamazoo, Michigan, across from the Southland Mall. Dues are \$20/year.

President	Frank Fellheimer	(616) 657-6106
Vice President	Dan Youngs	
Librarian	Bill Berner	
Archiver	Dave Oldenburg	
2nd System/GKAUG BBS		(616) 385-2448

We run a 130XE with 320K/7 DD Drives/BBS EXPRESS! PRO node #197

I was fortunate enough to make it to the November meeting. We had about eight people there. Bryant was ill, so he had to forego the activities this month.

We did some printing on my Star NX-1000C color printer. Mostly lotto numbers. I managed to put together a few routines and the lotto program sorts your numbers, allows you to select your number range, and prints each line in a different color. I will be putting this on the BBS as soon as I get a chance.

For those of you that have a color printer, I have been upgrading a few Analog and Antic programs to make better use of the color capabilities of the Star NX-1000C. I have done a little basic routine to set up the color selection/inserted some code for MiteMailer and VHS labeler program.

We talked about how the club shall be handled in the near future. It is still under advisement and we will discuss it more at the next meeting.

Next, we ordered pizza and went into the arcade. All in all, I was there about 3 hours this time. I found it most enjoyable. We had a couple of ST users there as well, they still need a leader to strike up some really good programming sessions.

I ordered a graphics scanner. Maybe I can have it ready for Demo for the Dec 09th meeting.

See yah soon: Frank



Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 3rd, 6:30 p.m. Wyoming Public Library, 3350 Michael S.W.

Tim Feenstra	President	(616)784-6230
5625 Buthview NE, Comstock Park, MI 49321		
Greg Williams	Vice President	(616)698-7319
George Nosky	Treasurer	(616)942-1527
Bob Bulliment	Secretary	(616)457-1766
Chuck Baughman	Librarian	(616)795-7373
Terry Reine	Membership	(616)698-7244

President's Monthly: 19 November, 1989

Well here I am, 2 days late and still not sure what to write about. It is not easy to write something a month and a half ahead. I do know I am looking forward to the Textpro vs. Atariwriter showdown that has already taken place at the December meeting. Textpro is a good word processor, but Atariwriter plus has many good features too. Read the monthly columns here in AIM, devoted to Atariwriter to learn about it, but you're on your own when it comes to Textpro. Maybe someone will do a feature on Textpro for those who still haven't decided which is best for them.

There are still some bugs in the disk catalog program to be worked out, but time is short till after the holidays, so I can't give a time table for the finished product yet.

I would like to say that the user group pages for AIM are getting to be a who's who of Atari groups across the country. It looks like this is the foretaste for Atarians of the future. I guess in a way we are forming one of the largest Atari user groups anywhere when you add all the members together.

The GRASS question page was in my AIM this month, so all members please fill them out and bring them to the next meeting so we can get an up to date hardware list made up. Send them to me if you did not make the December meeting, and I'll try to get something in text form posted on ETXE before Christmas. It is nice to talk to someone who has a special piece of hardware before you plunk down your bucks, only to find it doesn't do exactly what you want, or don't work with this program or that.

If any GRASS members get any of the new Atari stuff for Christmas, tell us about it, we would probably like to see a demo of it at an upcoming meeting.

Merry Christmas Tim



President:	Irwin Brooks	(801) 731-1516
Vice-President:	Richard Clark Jr.	825-5823
Sec'y/Treasurer:	Ken Karchner	776-8015
ST Librarian:	Jerry Kennedy	479-3635
8bit Librarian:	Dave Young	776-6273

Next LACE Club Meeting: Mark your calendar for Wednesday, 11 October 1989 at the Clearfield branch of the Davis County Library from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Headline: "Atari's Storming the Business Computer Market"

No it's not your imagination, it's my dream and it also should be Atari's dream. For the first time in Atari's history they are about to market a computer that will perform to the business needs. It's not perfect mind you, but darn close.

American businesses use IBM very heavily now, but the end is near. The reign of the IBM in business is almost over. The basic

IBM computer has been in existence since the early '80s. To make it to today, it has had more than its share of upgrades to extend its useful life. However, the eventual death is inevitable. The IBM Corporation itself recognized this fact. As a result, IBM quit producing the XT and AT lines. Granted, the reason that they left this market may not be entirely because of the obsolescence of the product, but I'm sure that it played a strong factor in the decision.

Few choices are left for American business' next workhorse. The new IBM PS/2 systems, mini/main-frame computers (IBM BIG blues, DEC VAX series, etc.), Apple Macintosh or an assortment of others. Each of these have NOT taken business by storm. The reason is that they lack the transportability (except for the mini/main frames). Transportability is defined as the ability to move software from one computer to another computer of a different make and still be able to execute it. Languages in general are more transportable than operating systems, but operating systems are more at the heart of the computer systems. So, that is where the commonality must be, in the operating systems.

The next king of the computer hill has not yet been selected. American Businesses are flirting with UNIX. It's operating system (OS) has speed and power that rivals the mini computers. It's a standard OS that can be transported to another manufacturer's computer and, when re-compiled, will run as it did on the first. This is a strong benefit. Since software is the largest computer investment that is made, the cost savings here are obvious. Think of it, when the computer is replaced or upgraded, the software will still be able to be executed. No training, no new manuals to read, no software frustration or even purchases just to acquire what you once had on the old system. The purchase can actually be based on the real needs of the demand for speed, multi-users, etc. without a large software penalty.

Enter Atari — The Atari TT computer will be able to run UNIX (per press releases). In addition, it is affordable and expandable (however limited). Atari should recognize that it now has the new business machine of the future if their cards are played right.

Public release of the TT is highly desirable from my vantage point but is probably not the best approach. A strong marketing push into the business realm will do more for overall sales of the TT than any general public advertising campaign could ever do. Business sales will lead with the average consumer following in the purchases. But it doesn't stop there. Serious business computers have the R&D continually developing product enhancements and accessories for future release. Staff personnel are always available to help the customer solve problems. Atari, you must realize that the company survival is solely dependant on the perception of the company in its customers' eyes. It's a big pill to swallow, I know. But, to play with the big boys you've got to act like the big boys. Besides, I know you can do it. All you have to do is focus the company resources on it and then wait and see. Good luck Atari. I'll be rooting for you.

Irwin Brooks November 16, 1989



Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiast members receive, as part of their dues, Atari Interface Magazine, a monthly magazine keeping them informed of what is new in MACE and the whole Atari community. Members are also entitled to purchase disks from the 8bit and ST public domain software libraries. 8bit disks are \$3 each and ST disks are \$4 each, and if you buy three disks from either library and you can choose a 4th disk absolutely FREE! Non-members may purchase disks at a slightly higher rate. Mail order is also available. For a catalog of current disks in our libraries, send \$2 for either an ST or 8bit catalog to the MACE address below. Please indicate ST or 8bit when sending in your order.

The most important benefit you receive is the help and support from (and interaction with) other Atari owners. If you're having a problem, need advice about a software package or whatever, your fellow MACE members can and will help. That's what a user group is all about -- helping each other get the most from our computing.

MACE meets on the third Tuesday of each month from 7:30 to 10 pm in Room 115 of the Southfield Civic Center at 10-1/2 Mile and Evergreen Roads.

MACE can be contacted at PO Box 2785, Southfield, MI, 48037 or by calling Ed Hanson at (313) 675-0044 or Bob Retelle at (313) 483-7358.

Any MACE member who contributes an article which appears in Atari Interface Magazine is entitled to a free disk from the library of his/her choice.

MACE BBS Numbers:

MACE WeST	(313)582-0657	(3/12/2400)
MACE East	(313)978-1685	(3/1200)
The College Board	(313)478-9647	(3/12/2400)
Down River Outpost	(313)675-4660	(3/12/2400)
Molin's Den	(313)420-0407	(3/1200)

October, 1989 Meeting Minutes

The October meeting was a Swap meet. Lots of old equipment changed hands. No other club business was addressed. The December meeting will be the annual Xmas party with lots of free prizes for MACE members. Refreshments will be available for all.



Mid-Ohio Atari Users Group Post Office Box 134 Ontario, OH 44862

Well, I am writing this after the November 11th meeting, which was held at the old location of A&B Computers on Fourth Street. It was planned for us to meet at the new location, but due to technical difficulties, the new building was not ready.

A new member joined the group this month, Kerry Bristol from Mt. Vernon. There were also several door prizes given out which included disk pouches, and mailing labels. There were almost enough prizes to cover everyone, so there were quite a few smiling faces!

A topic which brought a cool reception was that of the 1990

officer nomination. This has been a problem for several years. It seems that it is like pulling teeth to get someone to accept a position. Because of this, there will be ballots made up ahead of next meeting, and there will be room to write in candidates.

Unless there are unexpected problems at the new A&B Computer store, the next meeting will be located in the West Park Shopping Center, near the Midas Muffler Shop. Meeting will be at the normal time, 7-9pm on the 9th of December. Issues to be discussed will be 1990 officers, meeting day, continuation of the AIM newsletter, and a few other details. The club expects to donate more prizes as door gifts and drawings, so be there!



The Middle GA Atari Users Group is the sole Atari Club in the Middle Georgia area. We are composed of 60 members of which approx. half are ST users. Club president Pete Miller can be reached by phone at 912-922-5666.

The MGAUG address is 115 Feagin Mill Rd., Warner Robins, GA 31088. MGAUG meets the second Sunday of each month at 2 PM at the Warner Robins Library. Annual dues are \$5 with the newsletter optional. Use of the club library is free to all paid members.

November Meeting Due to the club president having to work Sunday, the meeting was changed to 4:30 pm. We had a good turn out regardless of the delay. It may have helped in that I had called everyone the night before to remind them of the meeting, and we were able to get some more members to come. I may start calling members each month to help pick up participation in the meetings.

Rumors seem to abound as to why Atari has not brought us the Stacy or the Lynx. Regardless, neither product has shown itself on dealers shelves yet and there is a lot of speculation of just when they will appear. If the Lynx can hit the shelves before Christmas, then it still has a chance to be a hit, but if it doesn't make it, then it may be trouble for this machine. Speaking of game machines, word has it that some computer gaming companies are looking to just making games for the new 16bit game machines like the NES TurboGraphix and SEGA machines. Well, I guess they won't have to worry about Pirating. What I do think they need to look at is, how many people are going to want to pay \$60 for each game that they want?

Another topic that is picking up some attention is the use of Scanners. With the increased interest in desktop publishing and scanners, people want to use graphics with their documents. How many advertisements have you seen showing a scanner being used to copy a picture out of a book? In many cases, this is a violation of copyright law. You cannot use someone else's work in your documents without permission. That includes the cartoon characters that many of us like to use and all pictures in

books and magazines which are in most cases copyrighted material. For us non-artists, it will make it a lot more difficult to dress up our newsletters with drawings from other sources.

Of interest on this month's PD disk is an ascii file called REVOLUTION. This is a text file detailing steps that we, as Atari owners, can take to further the interest in Atari computers. Each month has a separate project for you or your club to undertake. This is an interesting concept that is being sponsored by Artisan Software. I encourage each of you to get a copy of this file, take a look at it and express your views at the next meeting. We also now have demo's of FunctionZ and Keymodem. Modem users will want to get version 1.3 of the XYZ modem program that gives you Zmodem downloads, many new features have been added. Also a program called Display gives you a graphical display of the space remaining on each drive. Those of you who like to try new formatters will like FloorMat. FloorMat works in low rez and gives you an option to back out of a format operation if you make an error.

Larry Roxby has donated 7 disks of PD software this month and I will be going over some of the programs at the next meeting. Of interest to some of our sports game people -- Dave Crume's son averages 200 points against the computer in each game of TV Sports Football.

Cheat for IKARI WARRIORS -- Get in the tank and run it into the first bunker. Before it can blow up, push F1 to restart the game. When you get into the tank in the new game you will be indestructible.

Our next meeting will be at the regular time of 2PM at the library. Be sure to bring a blank disk and pick up some of the latest PD software. I hope that you enjoy the AIM magazine and can get some of your friends to subscribe through the club.

PORTS ATARI

P.A.C.E.

COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS

President	Tracy Hendershot	525-1058
Vice President	Larry Nadeau	525-7430
Sec/Treasurer	John Zupansic	394-9326
ST Librarian	Don Henricksen	729-6309
8bit Librarian	Gary Armbrust	729-6906
ST Coordinator	Geoffrey Bennett	722-3354
8bit Coordinator	Aaron Potopinski	525-1058

Membership to PACE is \$30 per year or \$9 per quarter. General meetings are held at 6:30pm on the third Sunday of every month. In the event of a holiday, a new date will be chosen and will be posted within the pages of this newsletter and on local Bulletin Boards. Membership includes a monthly newsletter, monthly meeting, FREE Disk-of-the-Month, access to our BBS, FREE printer ribbon re-inking, and FREE copying privileges to our VAST collection of 8/16 bit Public Domain programs. Ports A.C.E. is an alliance of families with a mutual interest in the Atari Computer and is an independent, non-profit organization. PACE hardware assets: 130XE, 1050 Drive, MacInker and a Supra 300 baud modem. Any written correspondence should be addressed directly to Ports A.C.E., Tracy Hendershot, 4835 Crosley Avenue, Duluth, MN 55804.

From the President... Is that snow I see outside? Snow, ice and cold, ECCH! With our outdoor activities declining rapidly, as with every winter, we'll have additional time to spend behind the computer. Already, consistently quiet BBSes are now becoming more active. I plan on doing some work with databases, uploading new software to Micro Simulations and fine tuning my MIDI expertise. Early in 1990, I would like to have a full blown MIDI demo that will be second to none. What are YOU planning on sharing with your fellow Atarians?

Our fifth annual Christmas party will follow December's PACE meeting. Like before, if everyone brings just a little, we'll have more than enough to make a full evening. Munchies, music, a door prize and computer talk. Don't forget to bring your children; there'll be plenty of JET FUEL for them!

Items of interest. The Atari Portfolio has finally reached the marketplace. It is receiving mixed reviews from the IBM publications. The STacy portable is still awaiting FCC approval. Sig Hartmann, long time Atari spokesperson, retired November 1st. Keith Ledbetter has shipped his first batch of Express! terminal cartridges to customers recently. Aaron Potopinski reports there is no sign of the Atari Lynx (hand-held game unit) in the Duluth/Superior area as of November 14th. Roy Goldman is currently working on Daisy Dot 3.0 for the 8bit. A multitude of new features and bug fixes will abound in this updated version. No idea whether 3.0 will be commercial or public domain.

Our ST Express magazine and disk arrived last week. This issue is dominated by game reviews and should steer you in the right direction when you buy that Christmas present for the kids or yourself! The Express disk will be distributed to paid-up members free of charge. I have also uploaded the files to Micro Simulations to download at your own leisure. We have also subscribed to the AIM ST Disk of the Month, a double-sided disk full of ARCD files selected from the major online services and from sources across the world. The AIM DOM will be available on our BBS as well as at the meetings.

Hot off the Z*Net Newswire: John Anderson, former editor of Computer Shopper and longtime Atari supporter, most recently acting as Senior Editor of MacUser magazine, was reported killed in the San Francisco earthquake.

Remember, Christmas is right around the corner. Keeping with the spirit, send your Christmas contribution to your favorite author of shareware software. These people work long hours bringing us excellent programs to enhance the performance of your 8bit or ST. Also, support the many companies who offer software for the ST. If we won't support them, they won't support us!

Winter Meeting Notice: If weather conditions are unfavorable (extreme cold, snow storm) the meeting will be canceled. Just use common sense!

Next Meeting: Sunday, December 17th at the Wisconsin D.O.T. Building, 6:30pm. Call any officer if you need directions. Bring your ideas, questions and suggestions. See you there!



ROCKFORD ATARI COMPUTER CLUB

Serving the Greater Blackhawk Area of Northern Illinois

Rockford Atari Computer Club serves the North Central and Northwest area of Illinois. We invite anyone in the area to attend our meetings. We meet at Rock Valley College, Rockford, IL: usually on the third Saturday of each month. Meetings start at 10 AM and feature demos on both the Atari 8bit and ST. Our Address is RACC, 3095 15 Ave. #1, Rockford, IL 61108.

Andy Learner	President	815-397-5316
Mark Kunkle	ST VP	815-874-5546
Jake Olbrich	8Bit VP	815-332-5303
Roger Creedy	Secretary	815-877-3769
Thom Lofthouse	Treasurer	815-654-1863
Dave Zolmierski	8BIT Librarian	815-654-0247
Mike Boughneit	ST Librarian	815-282-2530

November 20, 1989 As is my usual flair, I am running late getting our club notes into AIM by the deadline. Our last meeting, we had elections for new club officers. We are looking forward to the "Fresh Blood" making our club bigger and better. We have also signed up some new members, both ST and 8bit people. New members include: Jeff Raders, Dave Merrill, Bruce Kobishka, and Randee Lee

I'd like to thank those who have made our participation in AIM possible. Our meeting in December will be on the 9th. Yes it is very early, but due to the college closing for the holidays, and scheduling conflicts, we have had to take that date. After the first of the year, all meetings *will* be on the third Saturday of the month through the summer.

The December meeting is our annual Christmas party and Swap meet, so dig out those jewels you are not using, and bring them to the meeting to swap OR sell! That's about all I have for now, except to mention the BBS once again. (Like you knew I wouldn't!) We have dropped our link with the Wishing Well, but replaced it with the much more active Repair Shop from Salt Lake City, Utah. This BBS links with boards from California to Ontario, Canada, to South Florida. We really have an interesting network going and urge someone from the Michigan area, who might be running Express! Pro to get in touch with me to join our network. The BBS is Camille 2000 (815) 397-5327.

Till next month, G'Data...Andy

Net\$ware

Syllable Plus, is an Educational game by Joan Meinke Stoner. It is available from Educator's Publishing Service. Programs for IBM and Apple are also available from Educator's Publishing Service programmed by Educator'S Tutoring Consortium consisting of Mr. Anderson, Stoner and others. I programmed an Atari version of Syllable Eight for my wife Terri to use tutoring children with learning problems.

Syllable Eight is available on our bulletin board the Camille 2000 at (815) 397-5327. Download the file, and send a check

for \$25 to Net\$ware. Net\$ware will send 10 percent to the SysOp or 10 percent to any User Group Affiliate.. This is not a shareware product. We hope you like it and hope you send some money.

Another superior program, called Spelling, is also available on Net\$ware. The cost of Spelling is \$10. Other programs will follow on a monthly basis. Checks or mail inquiries can be made to our club address above.



President	Claudette Tishler	226-5644
Vice-President	Gary	521-2855
Treasurer	Kathi Koenig	892-0881
Newsletter Editor	Joseph Adato	449-6881
Disk Librarian	Barbara Carlstrom	371-2732

The ST Atari North Coast Enthusiasts (STANCE) is an independent, not for profit Atari computer user group and is not affiliated with Atari Corporation, or any of its affiliates, in any way. Membership dues are \$12 per year with a one time sign up fee of \$13.00. STANCE club meetings are held every third Monday of each and every month at B & G Electronics. (located at 15729 Madison Ave., Lakewood, Ohio 44107) starting at 7:15PM



The ST Club of El Paso is the only Atari ST and Mega user group in the El Paso area. Founded in 1988, The ST Club has distinguished itself as great help to those that are new to Atari computing as well as helping those that are old "hacks" at computing.

Meetings of the ST Club are held on the second Saturday of each month at the Richard Burges Branch Library, 9300 Diana. Meeting time is 12:30pm. Each meeting features demonstrations of the latest in software, and help for those that are having problems with particular programs.

Membership in the ST Club of El Paso includes the following benefits: A one year subscription to Atari Interface Magazine, discounts on computer supplies and software at Jenkins' Computer Store, discounts on services at local merchants, access to a huge PD file area, access to the ST Club area on STEP BBS, technical assistance, regular club auctions and social events. Voting membership is only \$20 a year! (A great deal, when you consider that a subscription to AIM alone is \$18!) Sponsored memberships are \$15 a year, and newsletter only memberships are also \$15.

To become a member of the ST Club of El Paso, call 915-821-2048, or write to: The ST Club of El Paso 10953 Yogi Berra El Paso, Tx 79934.

President:	Tim Holt	(915) 821-2048
Vice President:	Morris Miller	594-1906
Sec't/Tres:	Joann Anderson	751-2710
Editor:	Paul Stampfli	821-4861
Librarian:	Norm Bates	593-6234

From the Prez...First of all, let me say that last month's article "A SOB Story" was not written by myself as the credits claimed. It was written by club member Jay Hartley. I am sorry Jay was not credited with the article, as it was very amusing. (I could

claim credit, but Jay could easily beat me up if he wanted to...)

Now, on to biz! The Christmas dinner was moved from Cappettos to Jaxons'. Not for any real reason, other than that I promised our westside members that we would have a function on their side of town. By the time you read this, the dinner will have been over. I hope you had a good time. A \$25 dollar gift certificate to Jenkins' was given away, as well as one at the December meeting. By the time you read this, the meeting will have already happened. I hope I won. I hope I had a good time.

If you missed the November meeting, you probably missed one of the finest meetings ever! ST Animations. Terry Hughes demoed the video work that he has created using the ST. I was amazed. The amount of work involved was tremendous. (The amount of equipment in the room was tremendous. We haven't had that much stuff at a meeting since Morris Miller showed us how to MIDI!) He also played us the music he created using the ST. Thanks to Terry for all of his hard work.

David Thurman was next. He started off by showing the excellent animated short: The Snowman. Next, he showed us how the Vidi-ST works, and "shot us all." We made a nice group shot. If you missed the meeting, you are not in the shot. (Your loss) He then showed us how the ST can digitize sounds as well as pictures. What he did to my voice was er, not pretty. Anyway, thank you David.

Morris Miller won the first doorprize: Treasure Island, a game donated by Jenkins'. (It was written for the 260ST! A real collector's item.) The fact that the game had been sitting on Jenkins' shelf for six years had nothing to do with the donation, I was assured by Jim. David Thurman won the next doorprize: Tass Times in Tonetown. Congrats to both!

The treasury has about \$300. (How's that for accounting!)

I believe that you all have received or will receive a copy of the ST Revolution Handbook in the mail or at the meeting. If you have not, then please let me know. I am going to jump out on a limb and dedicate our club to this effort. I don't agree 100% with the effort, but I do believe that one of the main functions of any user group is to "spread the word." Please let me know what you think. Don't worry, I won't ask you to picket IBM, or bomb Jess Thurman's. Read the contents when you aren't busy. The revolution starts in 1990. I hope you will join in. All you old 60's radicals, here's a chance to relive the "Good Old Days."

The January meeting features Touch-Up and the Migraph Hand Scanner. If you are into DTP, then this is the meeting for you. February features Spectre GCR if I can buy it without my wife knowing about it.

I hope that the new year brings you all the joy and happiness in the world. A merry Christmas to you all. 1989 was a great year for the ST Club, and I think that 1990 will be even better.

Viva el Revolution!

Until next month,

Tim



S A T U R D A Y
M O N T H L Y
M E E T I N G S

Tinker ACE of Oklahoma meets the first Saturday of each month at 1 PM (12:30 set-up time) in the Moore Public Library, 225 S. Howard, just off of SW 4th and I-35 in Moore. TACE can be contacted at 104 E. Northrup, Midwest City, OK 73110 or at the TACE BBS (405) 755-9561, 24 hrs., 3/12/2400 baud, running Oasis 4.3 software with over 60megs online storage. ST & 8bit support. Dues: Full - \$20.00, Correspondence - \$15.00. Dues are prorated at \$1.25/month for correspondence membership and \$1.66/month for full membership.

President/VP	Greg Ray	(405) 964-3765
Sec/Treasurer	Stephen Moffitt	(405) 732-8449
Librarian	Chris Hamilton	
BBS Sysop	Rick Spencer	
Tech. Advisor	Ron Hamilton	(405) 387-5649



TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the last Saturday before the 18th of the month, at 9 am at the Rudy Zuel Memorial Library, on the corner of Center and Shattuck in Saginaw Township. Upcoming meetings are December 16th, 1989 and January 13, 1990.

President	Steve Volker	(517) 685-9035
ST Librarian	LeRoy Valley	686-6796
Treas/Secretary	Marty Schmidt	792-6029
8Bit Librarian	Ted Beauchamp	686-8872

Club dues are \$20, which provides support for both the 8Bit and ST, and full access to the club's PD library, along with a year's subscription to the Atari Interface Magazine. If you need to renew (or haven't joined us yet!), DO IT NOW!

FIRST UP...Hello again! There are a lot of things I have to pass on to you this month, but I thought I might mention if you had shown up to the last meeting, you would have heard it all firsthand. AIM is coming along very well, and the most recent evidence is the package we've just gotten and the monthly AIM disk. We are reregistering with AIM, to update and confirm any information, so they may better serve us. One area is the names, addresses, and personal abilities and interests of those club members who would like to be more actively involved in the production of AIM. I would like to see every member of TAG sign up, so give me a call and tell me what you would like to do.

The general consensus of the attending members was that the disk of the month idea from AIM is something to look forward to. I would like to know if you have any comments about changes or improvements in the AIM periodical, call me!

WHAT YOU MISSED! I guess the first point is the change in the time of the club meetings. Beginning with the December meeting, we will be getting together from 9 am to noon, instead of the 2 to 5 pm. So! Next time we meet I will be saying a 'tired' Good Morning!! to you!

An interesting archival note, that came up during the filling out of our new registration form, the first 'official' meeting of the Tri-City Atari Users Group was the 10th of September, 1983. I got the information from Marty Schmidt, our present treasurer,

who knows the date firsthand. HE WAS THERE!!

Marty was up first, making WordPerfect look even sharper with the five single-sided disks already installed on his hard drive. I must admit I liked much of what I saw. The first thing I missed was the onscreen WYSIWYG, that I am so used to with my WordWriterST, but then 1st Word Plus didn't do this either. Marty tells me that if you use the preview function when printing off the disk, it will show you all of your document just as it will appear. The demo was cut short when an unfortunate combination of utilities and harddrive access caused his system to crash, but all in all a good showing.

On to LeRoy and his demo of 1st Word Plus. We had little time left for LeRoy, but he showed us enough to convince me that both programs have their merits. There did not seem to be a document preview function available, but it was also obvious that 1st Word was written to take complete advantage of the ease of the ST environment. So I guess the competition goes on.

WHAT YOU SHOULDN'T MISS...Next month is the meeting NOT TO MISS!! This is usually the most enjoyable meeting all year, and this year shouldn't be any different. Our demo is a repeat of the Computer Chronicles show in which they showcase Atari and the ST computer. We will of course have the annual Swap Meet at this time, and don't forget to talk your wives and friends into cooking up all kinds of delicious little samplings that we can wolf down for our Christmas get together. 1983 to now, 1990, seven years, TAG's been around for awhile, and survived into the next decade. Not bad huh? MERRY CHRISTMAS ATARIANS EVERWHERE!!!

We will be formalizing our plans for the January Consumer Show at Fashion Square Mall at the December meeting, I have just heard from Dr. Charlie Brown of MIDI-TO-GO, that he would like to be represented with us, and might be interested in supplying a MEGA or two!

One more thing. I have, for a brief time, sat in the lonely President's seat at the TAG meetings, and I have a few thoughts to share about the view from here. First up, LeRoy Valley, we didn't say enough the day you relinquished this chair to me. We didn't Thank You enough for the years you spent holding this club together or for all the time you invested preparing for each meeting, or for all the time you must have spent at the keyboard writing the club notes. Hey! Sorry. We didn't really know just how much work it was. I for one am glad to see you in the back, working on some upgrade or handing out library disks, while I stand at the podium and try to get the rest of the club to join in.

My last point is like the first. To the extent that LeRoy, and Marty, and Ted and Bryant and others have given to the club, there is another, larger group that only takes. I would like to see each and every one of our members become more active within the next year. This is a challenge! We need you TOO!

Equipment volunteers for December:

We have Al Jennings bringing the VCR and the show tape, and we will be using the 8bit monitor for video output, so no additional equipment is necessary at this meeting. (But feel free to bring anything you want!! Someone might want to bring a machine to test all the great software to be had at the Swap Meet!!)



The next meeting will be held on December 12 in the Wolverine Room. There will be door prizes, and don't forget to bring your favorite game! (Please also consider bringing some hardware, or the officers will be forced to do something drastic such as mailing nuclear devices with your next AIM!)

The November meeting was delayed while members watched a graphic demo on the ST which ran for 30 minutes. The Union's "Care Bears" demo, from Sweden, demonstrates text scrolling and even includes a friendly jab at Amiga by our friends Calvin and Hobbs.

President Craig Harvey announced the feature topic would be Desktop Publishing. Craig also noted the January meeting would feature Telecommunications. He is working on getting the necessary ingredients to discuss (and possibly demonstrate) Packet Radio communications.

Bill and Pattie Rayl put the most popular packages through their paces. Pattie managed the keyboard while Bill fielded questions from the members. Timeworks is good in the "easy-to-use" department but falls behind PageStream in features and power. Calamus should probably only be considered for the most serious, professional application. Bill is currently converting all of AIM to PageStream.

Paul Walkowski discussed some of his ventures into "DTP on an 8bit." Paul talked about how he produces newsletters for several organizations by literally cutting and pasting output from several different software packages. Paul has given up using Typesetter, Newsroom, and NewsStation. Vice President Rick Schrader discussed his foibles trying out of Fleet Street Publisher. He returned the package and is now waiting a refund.

ST Librarian Russ Crum announced a new updated catalog disk, and a Disk-of-the-Month which contained, two conversion programs for creating Degas clip-art from PrintMaster icon files and several PM files to start the process.

8Bit Librarian Mike Millage was out of town on his annual hunting expedition, so Stand-In-8-Bit-Librarian Harry Price announced a disk bundle special which included several Sparta-DOS utilities.

A message from the WAUG Treasurer:

XMAS shopping time again! Hope you all get your ATARI Xmas presents. This group now owns an ATARI 520 and two SS drives. We hope to have a DS drive soon.

Andrew Solomon is the newest member of our group; Eddie Allison, Ken Antkowiak and Wayne Inman have all renewed their memberships. Have a very MERRY CHRISTMAS.

Remember, if you wish to join WAUG or renew your membership, please make your check payable to DICK SELKE and mail it to 31139 Cooley Dr. Westland, MI 48185

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SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						TACE 1 2
3	4	ACD	GRASS			COAC El Paso GKAUG MAUG RACC 9
CACE MGAUG 10	ACCT	WAUG	LACE			TAG
PACE 17	STANCE	MACE	CCCC			RACC
24 31	25	26	27	28	29	El Paso 30

January 1990**Events Calendar**

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		ACD	GRASS			TACE 1 2
7	8	WAUG	LACE			COAC El Paso GKAUG MAUG TAG 13

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